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THROUGH EIGHT DECADES

As Minister, Editor, Author

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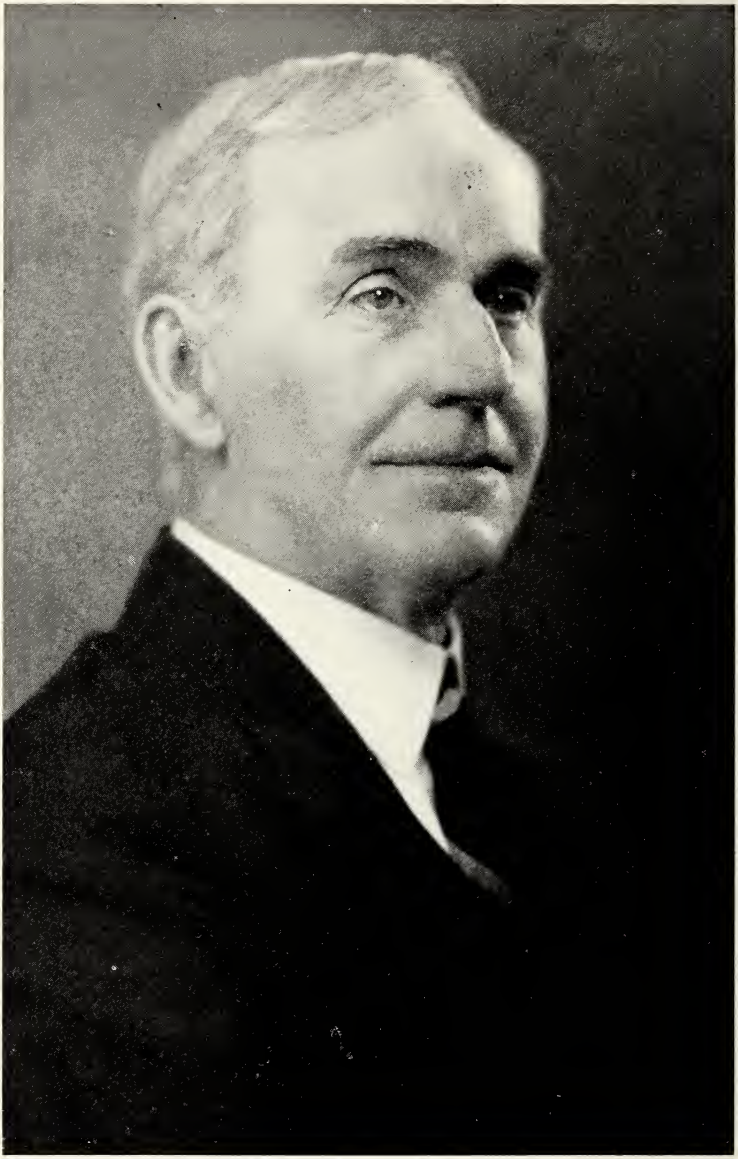

MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER

Through Eight Decades

As Minister, Editor, Author

By MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER
Member of the North Carolina Conference

1951

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To

OUR SEVEN CHILDREN
AND NINE GRANDCHILDREN
THIS VOLUME IS
INSCRIBED

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FOREWORD

The first three decades of this record belong to the closing years of the Nineteenth Century, which gives in a brief narrative my experiences in boyhood during the trying ordeal of Southern Reconstruction, following the Civil War. The struggles to get a start in early life and later to secure an education at Trinity College, as well as my early experiences in the Methodist ministry, belong to the closing years of the Nineteenth Century. The memories of these three decades are still most vivid. These would fill a volume; but then they would be of slight interest even to those of my family and friends for whom these brief recollections are put to record with the hope that my own children and grandchildren may get a glimpse of the way along which their father and mother have journeyed through eight busy decades.

Our family, during the five decades of this last century, in a most intimate way have had a part in these eventful years. Epie Duncan Smith and I were married on June 20, 1900. We entered most eagerly upon the new zestful life in this present century. The work of the pastorate and the later demands of the press received the best we had to offer for the forty years—twenty in the pastorate and twenty to the press as an editor of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate.*

Along through the years four volumes of mine have come from the press. These are: "Leroy Lee Smith—A Lawyer of the Old School"; "Bethel Among the Oaks"; "Thomas Neal Ivey—Golden Hearted Gentleman"; and "Men of the Burning Heart"—joint Author with A. W. Plyler.

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A number of the best articles in the present volume were written by Epie Smith Plyler. She has been the inspiration of my life for more than half a century and the wise leader and devoted guide of our seven children. But far beyond all else has been her continued inspiration in our home, in the churches we have ministered to, and also in the books we have written,—to say nothing of her inspiration to many devoted women, made better by her influence through the years.

My estimate of Will Rogers which appeared in 1935 as an editorial in the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* attracted more favorable mention than any other article I ever wrote. This record appears in Chapter V of this present volume.

The Contributions which have a place in Chapter VI of this volume first appeared in the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* while I was editor of that paper.

In the Prefatory Note to "The Lawyer of the Old School" I wrote: "This Volume is intended for his family and his professional friends." A like consideration is certainly uppermost in this present volume, which would cherish the delicate feelings, fine sentiment, and lofty purposes characteristic of Leroy Lee Smith, who did so much to make possible this later record "Through Eight Decades." His influence still lives in a world made better.

The final chapter of this volume deals briefly with our more personal efforts through the decades and incidents of family life especially in our last decade.

The Appendices have to do with the genealogies of the Smith, Norfleet, Hunter, Kimball, Plyler, and other families confined more largely to the states of Virginia and the Carolinas. These facts should be of some interest to these large and widely scattered families for the past two hundred years and more.

—M. T. P.

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THROUGH EIGHT DECADES

As Minister, Editor, Author

Chapter One

STRUGGLES OF EARLY YEARS

MY BOYHOOD DURING SOUTHERN RECONSTRUCTION

Set free as a prisoner of war, with the surrender of Lee in April, 1865, my father, Robert C. Plyler, son of Daniel Plyler, returned to his family in Iredell County, North Carolina, to begin life anew. Two of the five brothers, sons of Daniel Plyler, who were in the Southern Army, did not return. Pinckney was killed at Sharpsburg and Osburn J. fell at Ream's Station. Andrew D., another brother, fought through the entire four years of war and his brother Calvin served as Chaplain in the Army. This family suffered much as did many others of the South. For, as is well known, North Carolina sent into the military service more soldiers than the state had voters at that time. The entire population was enlisted in the struggle and everyone knew something of the terrors of the conflict. Neighbors, after the surrender, would often give a personal invitation to each other with the familiar words, "Come over some time to see us and we will talk about the war."

But later, the day came when the issues of Reconstruction, with its detested "Carpet-baggers and Scalawags," excited more general interest than war days. For then Reconstruction became a live political issue in which all the citizens were involved. Especially was this true in the decade of the Seventies which left memories far more detested than were those of the war years. The venom and hate that still linger in some sections of the South resulted from the treatment accorded the people by the North that then so humiliated the citizens of the Southland.

My twin brother, Alva W. Plyler, and I were born September 14, 1867. So my memory reaches back to the early years of the Seventies with that prostration so well known to those who endured the desolation, poverty and suffering of those years, during which labor was scarce and money largely unknown. The schools that ran for two or three months in the winter were barely worth the name; churches counted for little; and most families were broken and burdened. Little encouragement remained to renew the struggle, for not a few of the young men had gone west because of the higher wages paid, and then, too, Negro labor was badly scattered. Everybody worked, striving to meet this most desperate situation in the wake of war and the terrors of Reconstruction.

My own father bought three hundred acres of land—mostly wooded and cheap—on which he built a five-room dwelling, log barn and other farm houses. He planted an orchard and began to clear the fields to meet the needs of a two-horse farm. True, we were about as well fixed as were the neighbors of that section of the county, for everyone of ambition was now engaged in getting a new start. Some, however, were so crushed and broken and discouraged that they sat idle amid their desolation. But the younger and the more far-seeing set themselves to the tasks of life. This heartened other groups who gave little heed to the hard lot which was theirs.

My own early memories, with so few of the good things upon which children in these last times feast, left slight feeling of my having been deprived of the delights usual in the Christmas season, for other children in that section were on a common level. However, my first toy pistol, picture-book and fire-crackers, as I recall, became the envy of some other children on that first Christmas of the Seventies which linger in memory still.

But there were other compensations even in those days, with so few of the delights known in these later years in our schools such as movies and various activities of modern life. Ours was the glad freedom of the bare-foot boy in the fields and along the streams and among the delights of green woods, with all else that gathered about the situations of country life. But before many years had passed, I became somewhat aware of the unfavorable situation in which we had to live and help make our way.

The first political campaign I recall was the Hayes-Tilden Campaign of 1876. This made me strangely aware of the Southern conflict of arms and the poverty we were forced to endure. But, gradually, things began to improve. I saw the old "Leonard School House" built of hewn logs, with a rough, rock chimney and wide open fireplace to furnish the heat for the hardy, rustic "scholars," who sat on log benches, finally undergo a change. These rough benches gave place to crude home-made desks, fashioned for two, which were placed in angular rows about the new wood-burning stove. Then, too, this new and better furnished school was held for four full months each year, instead of two months as formerly.

The general welfare of the people improved and the churches also began to show the results of the improved condition of the people. Now, the citizens generally were being freed from the depression of war and the Reconstruction period.

Fortunately for our family, my father sold his plantation in this less-developed section of Iredell and bought a better farm two miles west of Statesville on the west-bound Southern Railroad in a far more progressive section of the county. This section had better schools and more enterprising citizens, being blessed with not a few college and high school graduates and the inspiration of a developing town life.

Then, too, the courage and fresh vigor of the New South began to be felt. So we boys, with the better and longer-term schools, began to dream of going to college as the products of the fields of that section greatly increased under the wise guidance of age and the experience of developing youth.

The yield of the fields, the trade enterprises of Statesville, the much better days coming to all the Southland, and the fresh courage born of faith and hope abroad in the land meant much to the youth of that day. Young people of aspiration were going to college and many of the old men and women saw the promise of a better day. My own youth at the close of my second decade of life was certainly far removed from my boyhood in the early days of Reconstruction amid the humdrum order of existence with its monotonous rounds of a people sadly wanting in ambition and aspiration for the higher and better undertakings of individual and community life. More and more glorious does it seem to have been finally relieved of that dull existence of those boyhood days, deprived of all but the tendency of childhood to be happy with but half a chance in life.

THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA

The decades of the Sixties and of the Seventies in the South were fully dominated by the Civil War and its aftermath—Southern Reconstruction. This horrid War between the States left a record of blood and fire. But far more despicable was the infamy of the victors in their treatment of a broken and helpless citizenship in the stricken Southland. Even yet, not entirely gone and fully forgotten is this outrage of the long years following the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. However, with the approach of the decade of the Eighties came the dawn of a new era for the depleted South.

Only those who lived in this decade of the Eighties can

know the change that then came to piedmont North Carolina, and to much of the South. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that only those who have come through the years of Reconstruction can appreciate the glad dawn of the New South. The hope and good cheer so wide-spread following the war and its aftermath rendered this decade of the Eighties a period of marvelous significance during the seemingly slow passing of the years.

As I recall the conditions more than half a century ago, the progress made in Iredell County these last six decades is truly marvelous. That early period was the good beginning in the Eighties of the new day for the farms and for the new industries springing up on the ruins of the old order. This slowly gave assurance of a better order of life and also a larger income for those laborers who toil on. Dwellings were improved and the community life made an appearance fully unknown before. New school houses were built, the school terms were lengthened, and the teachers better trained. More children were going to school than formerly, yea, than ever before, and the interest in education steadily increased. Churches and houses disclosed a new order of life and the young people assumed a larger place in the community undertakings. The promise of better years were on the horizon and this assurance gave good cheer.

My brother and I enjoyed our longest and best term of school in the new Academy south of Statesville, of which Professor A. D. Kestler, a college graduate, was the devoted and experienced principal. This counted much more for us and for all that section of Iredell County than we had known before that time. Some of us began to think seriously about how best to meet life's demands as we set ourselves with fresh diligence to the farm and to the other lines of life in which the youngsters in schools were inter-

ested. It was in the midst of the busy demands of life in the fields and in the nearby market-place that I was constrained to secure a better preparation for the exacting years ahead.

On our fruitful farm near Statesville, our father left most of the business affairs of the farm and the family to us. We built an enlarged residence, did most of the buying and the selling of the products of the fields, and were able also to increase the family income, as we more and more became a factor in the developing community life. The leading families of that section were an inspiration to us in the schools, the churches and other undertakings of our community life. Such families were the Davidsons, the Bostians, the Stevensons, the Longs, the Sherrills, the Howards, the Barringers and others fully as outstanding. Dr. Henry Long, a son of the "Old Doctor," became a leading surgeon of his day in the hospital he established. Louis Bostian went to Davidson College, and became a Presbyterian minister. Robert Davidson headed into a South Carolina college and two of the Sherrill young men entered Randolph-Macon College in Virginia. The two Plylers were inclined to follow these to the Virginia College after spending a year at Oak Institute in Mooresville. Later this school unfortunately was burned and ceased to be, though for years it did a notable work with such men as the late Thomas Neal Ivey and J. F. Brower at the head. Brower was in charge during 1888-89, the year we were in attendance. He took special interest in the Plyler twins and determined to prepare us to enter Trinity College in the Sophomore class, for he had been a leader at Trinity in the class of 1878. So we landed at Trinity College early in the John F. Crowell regime, while the college was yet in Randolph County. Consequently, we were in college at the beginning of football in the South and also in the larger expansion of Trinity which, three decades later, resulted in the launching of Duke University.

The family traditions of the sore ordeals endured during the war years of the Sixties and my own personal memories of the numerous and varied incidents during the hard and exacting years of the decade of the Seventies, as well as the sordid ordeal of the Reconstruction period that dogged the footsteps of all, make anything but a delightful background for the more hopeful years of the later coming of the New South. The marvel is that the people of the South were able to recover as well as they have. All the more significant becomes the new era that came in with the promising years of the Eighties.

DEVELOPMENT OF AFTER DECADES

The situation in North Carolina sixty years after the dawn of the new South, in the decade of the Eighties, leaves one at a loss to visualize the real condition of the people following the Civil War and the Reconstruction era of the Southland. We have come such a long way in material prosperity, educational advance and all else that enters into the making of the new civilization with its manufacturing, commerce, agriculture and other lines of material development that we certainly have gone beyond any and all expectations. The school system of these last times with high schools and colleges and universities, such as Duke and Carolina ranking with the best, have taken the place of the wreck and ruin following the Civil War. Then, too, we knew little of what we now term the essentials of modern civilization. Then there was not an automobile or movie or airplane in all the world. Even such attractive gardens as the Sarah P. Duke Garden of Duke University and those gardens about Wilmington, North Carolina, that have gained such wide notoriety in these last years as to become the gathering places for lovers of flowers far and wide were not dreamed of; nor the organizations of garden clubs yet planned. The promise of a New South is fast being realized in this latter half century.

For me, a farm boy in the teens then busy from early morning until late at night, to recall the situation sixty years ago, ties me in with the hundreds of toilers who were a part of that vast company in Carolina who were becoming aware of the dawn of a better day. Those days had memories which have largely faded away. So, one born and reared under present conditions can scarcely begin to visualize the coming of the New South over which orators of other days grew eloquent. Old times as we knew them have largely passed.

My early years on the farm demanded many lines of work where everyone worked as best he could to meet the necessities of a busy age at a time when labor was scarce, due largely to the migrations to other sections where the profits were more attractive. Well do I recall the young men, kinsmen of mine, largely from Illinois and Texas, who returned to visit their kinsmen. They usually would tell of the fine opportunities in those western states, all of which would make a long story that has now lost its interest.

But there still remains with me the enthusiasm with which I made ready to go to college following the year of tutelage under Professor J. F. Brower at Mooresville. This eager graduate of Trinity College expelled all thought we had cherished earlier in life of going to Randolph-Macon College.

Following a crowded day on the farm, my brother and I walked the two miles to Statesville to catch the mid-night train connecting for High Point,—having sent our trunk on the day before, so as to report at "Old Trinity." How times have changed as to travel as well as to town and city life! Then High Point was a small country town, with one spoke-and-handle factory and a small spinning mill. Now it has become a great manufacturing center of all lines of goods. More than this, it now has a college of its own and

the old Trinity of other years, has moved and expanded to become a national university to which students gather from the ends of the earth.

My brother and I, along with two other youngsters, secured a hack at High Point driven by a friendly and talkative colored man who introduced us to the interesting points along that five miles drive to Trinity. To these four country boys, little was new in Randolph save the difference of this section from the other sections of the state. It happened that two of the group were from eastern Carolina and two from the west. This was a first experience of the four country boys getting to college in 1889.

Young John F. Crowell, of York, Pennsylvania, fresh from Yale University, had been at Trinity one year. He had already made himself felt on the campus and on the athletic field, if that rough, gravelly hill could be classed as such. Soon we were all busy as bees.

The new President and several new members of the faculty proved an inspiration in the classrooms and in the entire college community. A dozen or more leaders among the students spread their enthusiasm abroad on the athletic field. The names of Rhaders and Tom Daniels, Bob and Stonewall Durham, four greats of the gridiron, soon were familiar to every "newy," most of whom had never seen a game of football. I knew nothing of college life—had not even heard of football. (Papers then in the South gave the game no place in their news column.)

The fall of 1889 were busy weeks in the classroom and on the football field. The most remarkable event before Thanksgiving was my first match game of football against Wake Forest in Raleigh which, after a hard struggle, Trinity won. Equally as memorable was the first taste of oysters at the old Yarborough House in Raleigh that night and our victorious return to Trinity from Raleigh. Those

were the days of small things in football and the beginnings of still "greater Trinity" with the later development that came with the launching of Duke University.

FINAL PERIOD OF TRINITY COLLEGE IN RANDOLPH

From the death of Braxton Craven in 1882 until the coming of John Franklin Crowell in 1887 as the new president of Trinity, the College had marked time, barely able to keep going. With the arrival of the young Pennsylvanian, fresh from Yale University, a new era dawned for the old College. Young Crowell brought in men who were in touch with the new movements in the educational world. At the close of his years at Trinity, the faculty consisted of men who had brought with them the vigor of youth and educational experience.

With the coming of these men things began to happen in both the classroom and on the campus. True, in a small college the demands of campus activities did not make such demands of the students as do present day activities. We then expected to stick close to the daily task of the classroom, yet we did find time to enter into other enterprises and to develop other organizations. Dr. Stephen B. Weeks gave a new impetus to the study of history and led in the movement for the Historical Society which was stimulated in its work by his successor, Dr. John Spencer Bassett.

Dr. Bassett also led in the organization of the *9019*—a patriotic and scholarship fraternity based on the Arthurian legends which for years has exerted a beneficial influence among the leading men of the College. This, among other things, resulted in establishing THE SOUTH ATLANTIC QUARTERLY, which remains an influential QUARTERLY among Southern journals.

A most far-reaching influence of President Crowell was his fine leadership in introducing football in the colleges of the South. He early encouraged Trinity, Carolina, and

Wake Forest to introduce the game in their sports. Soon other colleges joined them in the sport, though Northern colleges had been playing the game for more than a decade; Yale, Harvard, and Princeton being the big-three of the nation at that time.

The final three years of Trinity in Randolph, which ended with the Commencement of 1892, was a period of unusual excitement due to the efforts of President Crowell to remove the college to Durham. After the authorities had acted and ordered the transfer to Durham, the building of a plant sufficient to house the new College in Durham was of chief concern.

Notwithstanding the agitation due to local opposition to the transfer of the College, it has seemed to us of the class of '92 that we did the finest work possible, for the new members of the faculty gave their best and the students gathered inspiration from the victories won in athletics and the promises of better days ahead.

Personally, I can testify that these were joyful years of opportunity in the making of preparation for life's work. My own heart was fixed on getting the best training possible for the work of a Methodist preacher. Not much did I have to say about the work of the Ministry and never did I cherish a personal ambition for a chief place in the Conference as a select type of work in future years. My one dominant desire was to be able to do well the work of a faithful and true Methodist preacher. Sixty years of going up and down the land have deepened my conviction as to the wisdom of my cherished desire in college days.

Better by far than any testimony I can give of my dominant desire in my college days and the ruling passion of this embryonic itinerant Methodist preacher is the brief record of my itinerant career as a member of the North Carolina Conference, furnished by Doctor H. E. Spence for publication in the Duke Divinity School BULLETIN.

As Editor, he did me the honor to publish this article entitled "At Eventide," with the following *Introductory Note:*

"Dr. M. T. Plyler is a superannuate of the North Carolina Methodist Conference. Dr. Plyler is in many respects one of the most remarkable men of modern Methodism. A famous athlete in his day, a great thinker, a church statesman, a prominent editor, a writer of noteworthy books, Dr. Plyler comes to what might seem the end of the road with an outlook as enthusiastic as if he was just beginning. He is the living example of Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra—'Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be.' "

The article follows:

At Eventide

Dr. Hersey E. Spence for the Divinity School Bulletin requests "a word of retrospect" from this itinerent Methodist preacher now moving towards the sunset. This is rather much personal; but I dare not refuse such a dear friend of many years.

Fifty-five years ago, as one of the graduating class of '92 at "Old Trinity" in Randolph County—the last class before the removal of the college to Durham—I left July 1st of 1892 to supply the Carteret Circuit—the pastor there having died. This assignment held until the meeting of the North Carolina Conference at Goldsboro in December. Here I joined the Conference and for fifty-four years, without a break, I received appointments from this Conference. These first five months, free from academic routine, were spent by day and by night in revival meetings on the seven-point Carteret Circuit. A fine opportunity was this to try out the effectiveness of my own personal gospel. As a college youth my first sermon was from the text, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Later, the theme of my graduating thesis was "Con-

servative Progress." So I left college with the conviction that the Cross is central and all life should be progressive. This doctrine of mine seemed to work in the woods and the pocosins of Carteret, since during these months more than forty joined the churches on profession of faith.

True, my knowledge of Christian theology was seriously limited and my college degrees did not tempt me to rely on these, but my loyal devotion to the Methodist tradition and to the Wesleyan theology was most pronounced—that all men may be saved, that when a man is saved he will know it, and then be enabled to go on to a more perfect life, in full assurance that he will come out more than a conqueror. This simple gospel could be preached in school houses, log huts, and under the trees to all kinds and conditions of men. It certainly met the situation found in Carteret County.

During my first seven years in the Conference my salary was less than $500 a year and for the next seven less than $1,000 a year. But what of that? Money through all the years has been with me entirely secondary. In these small churches I came to know even the inner life of the people. Visiting in their homes, I was able to save souls, and to build up some. I was also able to give myself to serious study and prayer and preaching, instead of attending functions and clubs and meeting the demands made of a "good mixer." Furthermore, my reliance on the "One mighty to save" and the stress on a spiritual renewal of all men saved me the snare of the over-rated social Gospel which too often becomes a weak substitute for the gospel of a new Creature in Christ Jesus sufficient to change the entire life of an individual and the nation.

Our final year at "Old Trinity" was one of unusual inspiration and enlargement. The stir and enthusiasm under the fine leadership of President John F. Crowell inci-

dent to moving Trinity College to Durham told mightily upon the entire student body. To me personally, Dr. H. Austin Aiken, fresh from the Universities of Toronto and Yale, with his university outlook, brought speculative thought.

Along with all the rest of this came the honor of being a member of Trinity's first championship football team.

In this retrospect of the years, college life and the high days of academic rounds assumed new proportions. Life lived in the home, the school, the church, the fields, the woods, with the many and varied fellowships of boyhood days, counts for more than the hours in classroom at college. It may be more accurate to say that those experiences made possible the later achievements of the years. Most certainly my years have been full of struggles, misgivings and the infirmities that flesh is heir to, but in all these journeys One has held fellowship with me by the way.

My sense of insufficiency through the past half-century has constrained me to make the most of the passing years by reading the best books, by taking courses offered in such institutions as the University of Chicago, University of North Carolina and in my own Alma Mater. Had I been loaded down with academic degrees in the beginning an undue sense of sufficiency might have been mine. But the consuming desire to be a useful Methodist preacher, able to care for the pastorates assigned me in a proper way, has constrained me to strive from year to year so as to leave every charge better than I found it. Furthermore, that beautiful soul with a passionate love of music and flowers and little children, embodying the truest and the best and the noblest, did much through the years in a close walk by my side. She, with a devotion to family and church and community life has been my inspiration and guide to the nobler and more beautiful attainments of my own soul. She opened her soul to me in a most marvelous way.

Somehow in the early period of my ministry it seems never to have occurred to this young "itinerant" that he might one day become a presiding elder or a member of the General Conference. Losing sleep over appointments and scheming for lofty places were not any of my worries. No loss of sleep was mine. Still, I count it an honor and the joy of my life to have been a member of the Uniting Conference in Kansas City when American Methodism became one. For such a consummation I had longed and labored and prayed through the years.

Those who have gone into the prophet's office for a piece of bread usually fail to speak with the authority of a messenger from high heaven. Soft words and religious homilies can never deal effectively with the present world situation. Preachers who bemoan their lot, especially their desperate worldly estate, are unable to brace the occupants of a faltering pew or to lead crusades for God.

Our churches have not been entirely remiss in meeting the world situation during the past three decades. The Methodist Missionary Centenary did much in a needy day for Methodist missions. The Crusade for Christ in which we are still engaged strives to help the nations beyond every sea. The Aldersgate Celebration—this Bi-Centenary Celebration of Wesley's heart-warming experience just prior to the union of American Methodism—has done no little to save us from the spiritual inertia of a growing ecclesiasticism. Indeed, all these church-wide efforts have been put to the test to save the nations from the ravages of war and from that other sore hurt, beverage alcohol, now so fully enthroned in our nation's life.

My faith in the saving power of a spiritual church and my reliance on the United Nations for securing the peace of the world brightens the horizon for the future. Certainly never before has there been anything comparable to the Charter of the United Nations with its home in New York

City where the Council of fifty-five nations are to work for the peace and welfare of the world. This seems to be a practical application of the New Testament to the need of the nations. Notwithstanding the faltering and the failures of the Churches during the past half-century, the dawn of the better day is on the horizon.

Fifty years ago the North Carolina Conference had eight members with honorary degrees and perhaps that many of the younger men had spent a year at a theological seminary. Though many of the preachers had gone to college the big majority of them had not graduated. Then the tendency was for the leaders of the Conference to induce the young men to go into the "active work" of the pastorate. At present, all this has changed with the growth of colleges in the state and the coming of the Duke Divinity School, aided by the Duke Foundation. So, for a young man of the North Carolina Conference not to have college and seminary training is an exception and not the rule.

These exceptional opportunities are not free from the perils attendant upon a church that relies on training in the schools to furnish the leaders—John Wesley remains a warning and also an inspiration for the Methodists. He refused to take his father's parish of Epworth, electing to remain in the shades of Oxford striving to save his own soul. This, however, was before his failure as a missionary to Georgia, and that revolutionary heartwarming experience in London at the Aldersgate prayer meeting. Certainly without this wonderful new sense of God this Oxford Don bade fair to remain one of the unknown clerics of that ancient university in the worldly seventeenth century of England.

It has been said that Oxford University has been the home of lost causes. May we see to it that this shall never be said of Duke University. Moved by his experience of the warm heart John Wesley emerged from Oxford able to

change the course of history—Yes, to proclaim to all the world: *"The best of all God is with us."*

Through the financial depression of the Nineties and the later depression of the Twenties of this present century, also through two world wars, with the moral degradations and the spiritual decay incident to the backwash of war, this later son of the Wesleyan movement, now moving to the sunset, still faces the morning. The light on the Damascus road, the voices in the upper reaches of the skies, the Presence in the storm on the Mediterranean and the resurrected Lord that walked with the dispirited disciples on the dusty road outside Jerusalem lead me to say with every assurance that "the best is yet to be."

SEVEN YEARS OF VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

The years of hard work in obscurity with limited compensation were not of a type to foster vanity or exalt expectation for the years ahead. Still, as I saw it later, the results of those first seven years in the Ministry were among the most valuable of my entire life. The three years doing city mission work in Wilmington in which I came to know town life, and the two years in Murfreesboro with a small church in this old college town which allowed me fine opportunity for study and writing in doing non-resident work for an M.A. degree at Trinity College, were of untold value. Following these experiences, was an assignment as pastor to Grifton Circuit which made it possible for me to spend most of the year at Chicago University for study under such men as President W. R. Harper and Dr. Ira D. Price in taking certain courses in Prophecy, dealing with the prophets of the Hebrew people. Also there were courses given by Shaler Mathews and Clyde W. Votaw in New Testament studies. Then, too, were added studies under Dr. Albion W. Small in Sociology.

These first seven years so varied and exacting were of more real value in getting hold of the practical life of a

Methodist preacher than are most ordinary seminary courses. The essentials of life in country, village and city, along with the demands of the pulpit and the study, blended well into personal development. The experiences in the old town of Wilmington, in the country places of North Carolina, and, furthermore, the larger outlook furnished by Chicago have followed me through the years. At times, the opportunities seemed too few and the financial compensations limited in those days, but with the larger experiences of life in the passing of the years came a new estimate of these early experiences during those first seven years after leaving college.

The hard and exacting years of Southern Reconstruction, those long trying decades of the Seventies and the Eighties, crowded with the memories of the past were disturbing. But later the better times that were coming to this broken and depressed people of the South furnished new hope for future years. Notwithstanding all this there was little spirit of complaint, on the part of the citizenship of this section. Even in these hardest years, I do not remember to have heard my mother complain. At times, my father, who was of a different temperament, did not hesitate to deplore the period through which we had passed. A favorite expression of his was, "Starvation is staring us in the face." But for us of the younger generation, no such spirit prevailed. We certainly cherished the conviction that the better days were yet to be.

But now in a review of that early testing time, I am convinced that, though—hard and exacting,—those years made a valuable contribution in the way of preparation for the busy half century that has followed. Even though due allowance is made for the well-known tendency that comes to us all to glorify the times that are no more, I feel sure that the incidents of the morning time had no little to do with the noonday and the evening tide of that and following generations.

Chapter Two

NEW OPPORTUNITIES DEVELOP

ENTERING THE NEW CENTURY

The close of the Nineteenth Century and the opening of the Twentieth occasioned a world-wide discussion as to the achievements of the century then closing and the promise of the Twentieth. Press, platform and pulpit each made a contribution to the general review of the wonderful hundred years which were then numbered with the centuries gone. As I recall, the general impression in America was that no such century of progress and of general advance had ever been known, especially in science and material conquest. So pronounced was this conviction that many were free to say that nothing like this could be expected in the next one hundred years.

In my own limited sphere, I felt that it was good to be alive and that it was glorious to be young in such a time. My appointments in the North Carolina Conference for the next quadrennium were to the church in Louisburg. For four years the Reverend George F. Smith had done a monumental work in that congregation. The new parsonage was one of the best in the Conference and the new church there was to be occupied the coming Easter. So excellent was the record made by Brother Smith during the past quadrennium that he was sent as pastor to the Edenton Street Church, Raleigh. Naturally this was the most pleasing to one such as I who had hitherto served what was known as the "young men's appointments," with no parsonages and often little else to encourage and excite interest.

Here in this old town was the Louisburg College having

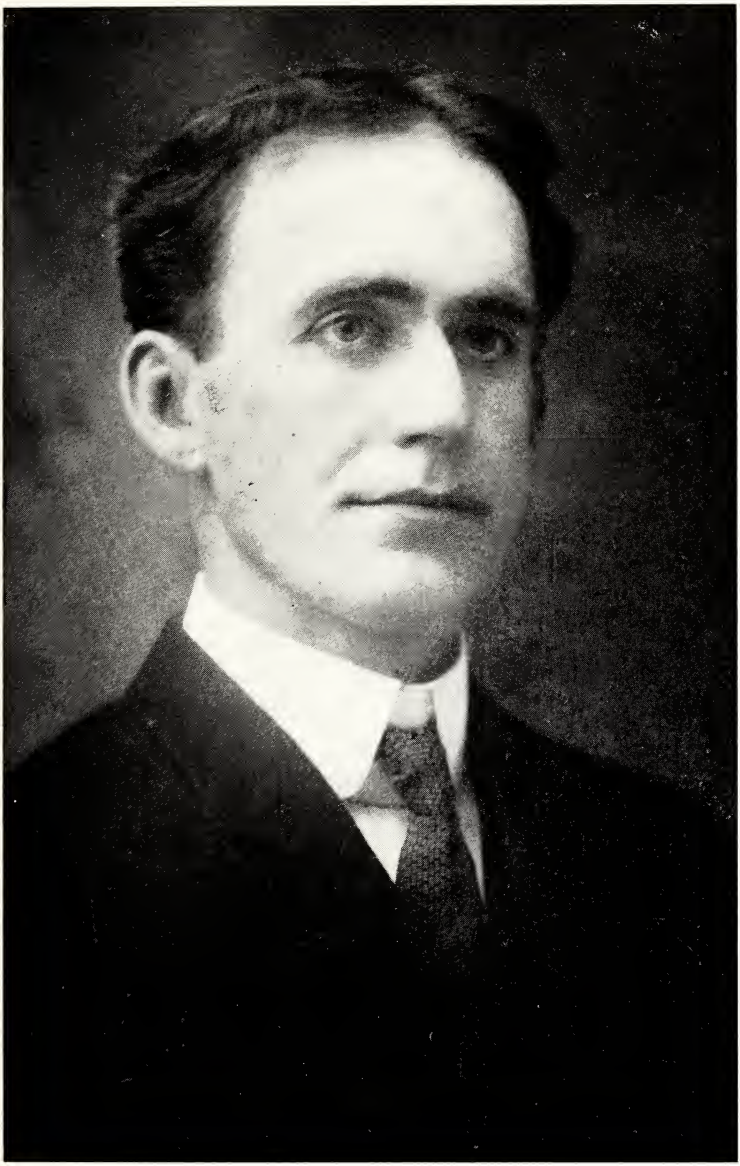
in attendance a promising group of young women from year to year and also I rejoiced in having this well established church which had been served through the years by men of devotion and success. More than this, my seven years of experience in the work of the ministry and the new, fresh vision of the church I had gained by my recent experience in Chicago University made me anxious to begin in a more effective way as a preacher and a writer to meet the demands of the new century. It turned out that I did make a beginning as a contributor of articles to papers and magazines. But the best of all my plans had been laid to secure some one to take charge of that attractive parsonage which was so much in need of a tenant.

This scheme had been in the making for three years. I was aided by the friendly help of a young lady who after graduation at Greensboro College had continued her training in Toronto and at Amherst College, supplemented by the unusual opportunities in her father's home and in the local churches of Gates County.

A Rare Day in June

This is not the portrayal of a romance or else such a notable occasion so rare would be described at great length. It was on the 20th of June, 1900, that Epie Duncan Smith and Marion T. Plyler were united in marriage by his twin brother, A. W. Plyler, in the Methodist Church in Gatesville, North Carolina. A reception, the evening before the marriage, was a delightful occasion with the family and close friends present. This was truly the beginning of a full half century in which this couple, with many joys and their full measure of sorrows, have spent their days in the Methodist itinerant ministry, given chiefly to the work in the supervision of the pastorate, to three districts in the Conference, and to the *North Carolina Christian Advocate.*

Our first child, Edla Mern, was born in Louisburg and her sister, Ruth, two years later at Gatesville. Both of



MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER

IN 1900

whom seemed to us to have gone too soon. The one reached four years and the other three. Their going was our first sorrow. So, through the long years the presence of the little white coffins we have seen on the ministerial journey have made us sorrowfully aware of other hearts that break.

The following editorial note from the *Raleigh Christian Advocate* indicates the deep shadows through which we were passing:

"We feel sure that we are not betraying any privacy in reproducing for our readers the following touching words taken from a private letter of Rev. M. T. Plyler to the writer: 'Your words of sympathy were most comforting in the midst of our double sorrow. To see little Ruth, to us so bright and so beautiful, go one short year after our precious first-born left us was almost too much. The shadows are deep about our little parsonage home and the precious mother-heart almost broken. Though it is sad to see life's plans fail, and our early dreams perish amid such wreckage, there is comfort in believing that there is light beyond the shadows and that the two little graves under the cedars are not all. In the hours of our questioning, the eternal world has come very close, as this world seemed so empty with no consolation to give or hope to offer. The many messages from dear friends are cherished beyond expression. From my heart, I thank you.'"

Most appropriate seem the words of these children's grandfather, Leroy Lee Smith, written by him following the death of one of his own children:

The Buds that Never Bloom

"Of all the flowers of wood or field,
That aid the world of gloom,
Which are they the richest promise yield?
The buds that never bloom.

"The tiny bud nipped by early frost,
Wrapped in leaflet secure,
Though a part of its beauty be lost.
Is perfect, sweet, and pure.

"The young, rounded bulb, so full and fair,
Shall never burst full bloom
To lend all its fragrance to the air
And make its beauty known.

"But still it gives joy in its brief day,
And fills its mission well.
So bright, it promised a longer stay
Of life before it fell."

MAKING THE ACQUAINTANCE OF EARLY SETTLERS

During my early years in the Ministry, it was my good fortune to become acquainted with the Albemarle Country of eastern North Carolina which was visited by George Fox, founder of the Quakers, more than two hundred and fifty years before. In the same year before Fox came, William Edmunson, another Quaker, led in the first religious service ever held in North Carolina. Most appropriately a marker of stone now indicates the spot on the banks of the Perquimans River at Hertford. One hundred years later the first pioneer Methodist preachers came this way. These were Joseph Pilmoor, Jessie Lee, and the immortal Francis Asbury.

In Gates County the traditions of the leading families of that section were most pervasive. The Leroy L. Smith family were related either by blood or marriage to many of them—the Norfleets, the Harrells, the Crosses, the Copelands, the Riddicks, the Hunters, and scores of other Smith-related families. Then too, this Smith family was fully devoted to the best in home, church and school through their generations for more than two centuries.

In my Prefatory Note to the volume issued three decades ago entitled, *Leroy Lee Smith, A Lawyer of the Old School,* I wrote: "That the delicate feelings, fine sentiments, and the lofty purposes cherished; the professional fidelity, political sincerity, and religious devotion displayed; and loyalty to the ancient order, affection for home, and love of unsullied soul, so characteristic of Leroy Lee Smith, may not perish utterly, this little volume is written."

The foregoing consideration has contributed to the form and the content of that volume telling of one too inherently modest to parade his virtues. But so long as men put a premium on integrity of life and strive to face the future unafraid, so long will such records be not wholly useless.

The daughter of Leroy Lee Smith has written most interestingly of this people in the following paragraphs which appeared in the *South Atlantic Quarterly.*

I.

Epie Smith Plyler*, a genuine product of the Tidewater region writes:

"In considering the life of the early settlers of Tidewater Virginia and the Albemarle section of North Carolina which was an expansion of the Jamestown settlement of 1607, it is necessary to keep in mind what they brought with them from Old England. Furthermore, they were located around Hampton Roads, a perfect port, where it was easy to keep in constant touch with the old country and from which they could draw supplies to build a civilization in the new land of Virginia. Migrating from an island home, they must have found their new domain pleas-

* Mrs. Epie Smith Plyler (Mrs. M. T. Plyler) is a daughter of the late Honorable Leroy L. Smith and Edla Norfleet Smith. Being eighth in line from Thomas Norfleet, seventh in line from Isaac Hunter and fifth in line from Seth Riddick, to say nothing of other parallel lines extending over two centuries, she could not escape many family traditions. Her lawyer father was an interested student of history especially of the Albemarle country. The Smith family dates back to the early days of Isle of Wight County, Virginia.

ing and familiar to them, for there were vast stretches of alluvial soil and unlimited waterways, creeks, rivers, bays, sounds, and the Atlantic Ocean.

But the climate was much milder and the land much kinder than that of the British Isles. The sea supplied an abundance of every variety of seafood and gave the people and outlet for trade. Many saw the possibilities in the soil and became planters on large plantations. Bringing with them the instincts and the culture of the British race, they emphasized family life and the virtues that perpetuate it. They prized family ties and family traditions and enjoyed a social life that will scarcely be matched by any succeeding generation. Hospitality abounded and was dominant in their plan of living. Consequently, the worth-while settlers aimed to acquire more land, to build large homes, to gather about them more slaves, in order to cultivate the soil and supply the necessities and the luxuries of a rural aristocracy. A man who was not "a good provider" and failed "to promote his family" was soon outclassed, and his children were not eligible to marry into the families that appreciated intellectual culture and the social graces. Thus, there were two distinct social groups and a certain understanding that kept them entirely separate. Should one from the higher strata marry "beneath her" she was counted out of the family group, and little mention was afterwards made of her.

To be born a woman in no sense carried with it the title of 'lady.' In my early childhood, my grandmother gave me the interpretation of 'lady' that was given to her by her grandmother, and she made it plain that only one standard and one code of conduct entitled a woman to the privilege of being called "lady." She expected her children and grandchildren to follow naturally into the way that ladies lived, yet this way meant restraints. Possibly the restraints involved in 'being a lady' do violence to many

of the modern methods of child-training, yet it produced beautiful women that have made an inestimable contribution to our American civilization. To keep the traditions one must "Be a lady in the kitchen and a lady in the parlor."

Much was embraced in that old adage that our great grandmothers instilled in the minds of their descendants. On the one hand, it meant that every lady should provide good food for her family. If she did not know how to prepare it she could not have it done by her servants. On the other hand, it meant that a lady must possess charm, ease, grace of manners, and good taste in dress so that she could make a parlor where friends would gather and find delight in conversation. There were parlors in those early days, and they were set apart for company. When guests arrived, it meant their spending the day, possibly the night or perhaps longer. If there was not so much furniture in other parts of the house, the parlor usually had substantial mahogany furniture, of exquisite design, with horse-hair upholstering that made good sliding for the children who were admitted for a short stay. The center table was an essential piece of parlor furniture, being heavily carved with a marble top.

II.

In later colonial times every lady had her garden, usually surrounded by a picket fence. Many gardens were elaborate, yet all satisfied the needs of the household. There were well-kept walks that were bordered with favorite flowers. The vegetables were grown in beds laid off from a wide central walk. Usually, there was boxwood about the garden. Some times it grew on either side of the wide central walk, and frequently there was a grouping of the tree box in the center. In the corners were planted fig bushes and hazel nuts, and somewhere there had to be a summerhouse or trellis for running roses, and other vines. Oftentimes the woodbine was used effectively, for it was easily transplanted

from its native heath, only a short distance away. Madonna lilies, peonies, damask roses, moss roses, calacanthus, snowballs, syringa, flowering almond, lilacs, grape-hyacinths, snowdrops, and jonquils grew in great profusion. The most highly prized flowers of these old-fashioned gardens were those with delightful perfume, since fragrance was essential in a lady's toilet as well as in household management. To be sure, our grandmothers and their grandmothers were household-minded, for the homes before the Revolution and for some years afterwards were the centers of the industrial, the social, and the intellectual life of the people. The homes were store-houses from which were gathered the resources to build a mighty nation. The family circle was real, and in the evening it was complete, gathered around the great fireplace lighted by the flames from oak and hickory logs. These were the occasions when fascinating stories were told to the youngsters, and the feminine portion of the group kept their knitting needles going at high speed as a sort of an accompaniment to the general merriment. When more light was needed than the candles provided, the small boy sitting by the fireplace would heap on fat pine to make a brilliant illumination. By no means was that a day of specialists. Every one assumed individual responsibility with grim determination. Women had to gather around themselves the things they liked and needed in their daily domestic life. For this reason, they grew hops, sage, savory, sweet marjoram, thyme, rosemary, catnip, and lavender. They used the hops for making yearst, some of the herbs for seasoning, and great bunches of lavender blossoms were gathered each year to lay in the linen chests as well as in the chests which contained their fancy quilts.

Women had to know the ills common to humanity and a way of curing them. Since doctors were not abundant, they were not called in for minor ailments. So it came about that the black mammy, with her imagination, con-

cocted a cure for every ill. She would advise: "Now don't let dat chile see himself in the looking-glass 'til he gets his teef cut 'cause hit will make him cut teef hard. But if you gits a bear's toof and puts it on a string around his neck, it shore will make him cut teef easy—and I tells you, I allers takes my babies upstairs de fust thing; hit makes 'em high-minded. Dat's what I done with Marse James, and Marse John and Marse Robert."

For many years after Captain John Smith's colony landed at Jamestown, the homes were necessarily crude, and living meant a heroic struggle to gain what brought satisfaction. Plantations were gradually extended. Slave labor was brought in to till the fields and fell the forests in order that the resources at hand might be exchanged for products imported from Great Britain and the West Indies. In an issue of the North Carolina *State Gazette,* published at Edenton, dated January 10, 1794, there is printed the following advertisement: "Watson Scott & Co. at Suffolk, and Ebenezer Scott & Co. at Petersburg, having received, by the late arrivals from Britain, their usual supplies of Fall Goods which they will dispose of on reasonable terms, and make a liberal discount to those who purchase with ready money. They have also for sale, West India produce of all kinds, Madeira and Teneriffe wine, apple and peach Brandy, London Porter, Gloucester Cheese, allum and Liverpool salt, Dutch Gun Powder, and a parcel of Cologne mill stones of different sizes. Suffolk, Oct. 15, 1793." In the same issue appeared this advertisement: "Henry Wills has for sale at the printing office, Brown's self-interpreting family Bible, with plates, Blair's Sermons, Hume's History of England, Plutarch's Lives, Life of Homer, Robertson's Ancient India, Guthrie's Grammar, Shakespeare's Plays. 3 vols. royal 8 vo. Spectator. Arabian Nights Entertainments, Vicar of Wakefield, Letters of Junius, New Robinson Crusoe, Mirror 2 vols., Misses Magazine, Fables for Ladies, Ramsey's Songs,

Lyric Works of Horace, translated, Blackstone's Commentaries, Every Man His Own Lawyer, Medicine, Cullen's Materia Medica, New Dispensatory, System of Surgery, Art of Speaking, Pike's Arithmetic, Aesop's Fables, Caesar's Commentaries, Young's Latin Dictionary, Virgil, Greek Grammars. A variety of entertaining histories epitomized for the use of children, viz, of Baron Trench, Robinson Crusoe, Parmela, Clarissa Harlow, of the Bible, etc., etc. Sealing wax, Wafers, Writing paper, Quills, Geographical Playing Cards, etc., etc., also Almanacks for the year 1794." In the *State Gazette* for September 14, 1797, a merchant of Edenton, John Little, advertised for sale, "salt, Liverpool China and Queens Ware in crates, well assorted, stove ware, London bottled Porter in Casks of 10 dozen, pipes, barley in small casks, and a few chaldron of coals."

III.

Often in the patents and deeds drawn appeared the designation "Gentlemen," as in the case of a deed made by Marmaduke Norfleet, gentleman, to George Washington and Fielding Lewis, gentlemen, dated April 25, 1776, for certain tracts of land for £1,200 of Virginia money.

Such families as the Riddicks, the Sumners, the Smiths, the Bakers, the Hunters, the Norfleets, the Gordons, and the Brownriggs brought with them to America an appreciation of the finer things of life. They built homes, and the women who presided over these homes were refined and walked in gentle ways; they took great pride in everything that contributed to make a home of beauty.

It was an essential part of every girl's training to know how to use a needle skillfully and artistically. Even little girls were trained to "roll and whip," hemstitch, to do drawn-work, and to embroider fine linens. At the Edenton Tea Party, Oct. 25, 1774, no doubt every woman there had made her own dress, and, perhaps, each was wearing her best silk with a "breast-pin" at her throat. A lady's brooch,

or "breast-pin," was usually a handsome piece of jewelry, oftentimes having a fancy arrangement of her husband's hair under glass in the center.

In the day of the beginnings of the commonwealth there were landlords who possessed dignity, chivalry, and honor. These qualities gave woman an exalted position, and created a sense of obligation to the unfortunate. In a raw country, they practiced the hardy virtues of daily living and preserved to posterity an appreciation of beauty and a love of culture and learning.

Then, too, it must be remembered that all the flat country along the Atlantic has had much in common. Eastern Carolina and Tidewater Virginia have been strikingly similar since the earliest settlements along our American seaboard. The easy communication by water for a people speaking the same language contributed to trade and profitable exchange of commodities all the way from Boston to Charleston. Furthermore, all that wide region between the James and the Roanoke rivers was populated by a homogeneous people long before the cross-country migration from Pennsylvania and Charleston to the Piedmont region of the Carolinas began.

For a trip from Charleston or from Philadelphia by wagon or ox-cart to the rolling hills of the Piedmont Carolinas made for a serious isolation of life unknown to those who were able to make full and free use of the high seas as an ocean highway.

Furthermore, let it be kept in mind, the counties of Norfolk, Nansemond, Isle of Wight, Surry, Southampton, Brunswick, and all of lower Virginia, were far more nearly one with the Albemarle country of North Carolina than was all that vast region West of Raleigh. Though a more decided difference in culture and habits of thought of the two sections existed prior to the American Revolution, some of these distinctive elements remain to this day.

A few of the old families identified through the years with the life of the Tidewater region may be used to illustrate what is meant. These can be nothing more than exponents of the civilization taking shape under the pioneer conditions of that day. Fortunately, enough of the life of this people remains to make a contribution to the present. Those early settlers have not yet passed entirely out of the picture. Many of their early wills are in the office of the Historic Commission at Raleigh. The Land Grant offices at Richmond and at Raleigh, as well as the county court houses, contain impressive records of these people. Old mill sites and ancient homesteads on plantations that have continued for generations in the same families indicate the former stable citizenship with men who led in affairs civic and religious. Some of these men in public life held on through the long years as did General Joseph Riddick who represented Gates County in the General Assembly for thirty-one years. From 1781 to 1817 he was continually in public life. Such men were towers of strength in their day.

MY PASTORATE AT CHAPEL HILL

My three years' pastorate at Chapel Hill immediately following my four years as pastor at Louisburg proved to be most valuable in a personal way as well as for laying the foundation for enlarged church facilities at the State University during future years in ministering to the students at Chapel Hill.

Class work during three years in courses leading to the M. A. degree brought me into contact with the students on the campus and also gave me a knowledge of the needs of the University so that I was able later, as chairman of the Joint Commission, to lead in building the Methodist Church at Chapel Hill at a cost of more than $225,000. This extended through a period of more than a dozen years. The money for this was furnished by the Methodist Church at

large and also by the church in North Carolina, as well as personal contributions from interested individuals. But for the personal knowledge I had of the situation and the effective leadership of Dr. Walter Patten, this noble work could not have been done at that time.

During this same period, I traveled across this country to the far West and gained a knowledge of our vast land and of our American people which has been of much value to me through the years. Which, with the knowledge I had of the rest of the country, has added much to my equipment for doing the work of the Church at home and abroad, especially during my twenty years as editor of the church paper and my many experiences in the General Conferences of the Methodist Church.

In the General Conference, of which I was a member, held in Oklahoma City in 1914, I began to appreciate the value of my varied experiences of life in the schools and my travels which brought me in contact with the many phases of the Methodist Church in its contacts over the world with its expanding horizons.

The entire area of the historic, scenic Elizabeth City District, of the North Carolina Conference, which stretches from the Virginia line to Cape Hatteras and across most of the Albemarle section of the state has been a region of unusual interest to me through the years. As so often stated, here on Roanoke Island the English race first settled on this continent and the first flying in a heavier-than-air machine was done by the Wright brothers at Kill Devil Hill. This has become a center of interest for the whole world. One of the most interesting days of my life was spent here with the Wrights after they had become notable the world around. I am always delighted to see the well-known Pageant enacted on the North End of the Island at old Fort Raleigh. From this point, the Wright Monument some twelve miles across the water, is in full view. This view

renders most impressive the close proximity of the first settlement of the English race here on Roanoke Island and the first flying of the Wrights at this point on the American continent. These are two historic events truly notable in the romance of our eastern seaboard.

For one born and brought up in Piedmont Carolina, with its many traditions of the American Revolution and its trying experiences of the Civil War and Southern Reconstruction, this situation was most appealing. The stories of French Settlers in Canada and of the English in New England and in Virginia had seemed far off. So, for one to be brought in person to the site of Sir Walter Raleigh's and Governor White's colony, it was to live and breathe this air of romance, and also to become a vital part of America and its history. Then along with this is added the birthplace of aviation with all it means to the world in the after times.

A ROMANTIC REGION

What a land of beginnings! Here, the English first settled a colony on American soil and built a fort; here, the first white child of English parents, Virginia Dare, was born and baptized according to the rites of the English Church; and here is the birthplace of aviation. True, Raleigh's Colony is known as the "Lost Colony" and the fate of Virginia Dare accounts for the "Legend of the White Doe," but the achievement of the Wright brothers is certainly no lost cause. Oxford University may have been the home of lost causes, but truly this modern shore has become the home of victorious conquests on land and on sea. In like manner, this region of Roanoke Island continues to win in the air over land and sea the whole world around.

How different is the reconstructed Fort Raleigh from that of half a century ago! The fort was built originally in the shape of a star, the points of which were indicated by

small stone markers. In the center was a large granite marker bearing this inscription:

"On This Site in July-August 1585 (O. S.)
Colonists Sent Out From England by Sir
Walter Raleigh Built A Fort Called by Them
The New Fort in Virginia
These Colonists Were The First of The English Race
in America.
They Returned to England in July, 1586, With
Sir Francis Drake.
Near This Place Was Born on the 18th of August, 1587
Virginia Dare
The First Child of English Parents Born in America—
Daughter of Ananias Dare and Eleanor White,
His Wife, Member of Another Band of Colonists
Sent out By Sir Walter in 1587."

The birthplace of aviation is commemorated by the Wright Memorial that cost more than $250,000. Built of North Carolina granite, it marks the place where Wilbur and Orville Wright did the first flying in a heavier-than-air machine in the world's history. This memorial rises above the top of Kill Devil Hill, North Carolina, one of the high sand dunes near the Atlantic. The beacon towers more than 150 feet above sea level, its light pointing the way for airmen and for ships at sea. The United States army engineers have anchored this mountain of sand which was ever drifting before the wind by clothing it with sub-tropical vegetation, literally tying it to the beach with blades of grass.

The government erected this notable monument at a spot that will become more and more a sacred shrine of civilization. The Wright brothers in their years of obscurity kept toiling on, giving but little attention to what was going on around them. They were such unconscious workmen,—free from all pretense and parade,—that the people

around them on that isolated beach failed to appreciate what was taking place.

The type of early settlers as well as the topography of the Carolinas have had much to do with shaping and fashioning the life of the Carolinas, giving quality and color to their people. In the Piedmont, especially in the early years, the German and the Scotch and the Irish were dominant, while on the coast the English held sway. In the Tidewater region those English colonists were in reasonably close touch with the Mother Country; but it was otherwise with the pioneers of the foothills who had to rely so largely on the resources of pioneer conditions. Naturally, with those far removed from the coast, trade could not be carried on with the old country as it was by those who lived near the wide waters open to navigation. The rivers and the sounds and the high seas ministered most favorably to those of the low lands.

TWO PASTORATES IN WILMINGTON

A stay of four years on the Elizabeth City District which then embraced most of the Albemarle section of the state north of Cape Hatteras proved to be a time of hard work in a romantic region. This period was followed by four years as pastor of Grace Methodist Church in the "City by the Sea." Thus after twenty years, I returned to the scenes of my first pastorate which is now known as Trinity Church. This last pastorate at Grace embraced the closing years of World War I. Wilmington was then much involved in the war. More than 500 of the young men of the city had enlisted before the draft became effective. All of which interfered greatly with church work and the usual rounds of life.

I might write at length of my two terms of service in Wilmington and also of the twenty years that intervened, but suffice it to say that these experiences proved of much value in the work of the community during the war years.

MRS. MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER

AT FORTY YEARS

In my efforts during the terrible scourge of influenza before and following the period of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, some of the folks of the city were most appreciative. Mr. James Sprunt, a leading Presbyterian brother, proved to be one of the most appreciative and helpful men I have ever known.

My two pastorates in Wilmington have been cherished memories through the long years. Especially so was that one at Grace Church. This was the last of my varied pastorates which was followed by four years on the Durham District and four on the Raleigh District. The next twenty years were devoted to the *North Carolina Christian Advocate.*

During our stay in Wilmington, we had part in many things that lay outside of the local pastorate. The following article by Mrs. Plyler was given on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the Woman's Conference Society in January, 1917, when Grace Church entertained the organization.

This address of welcome to the missionary women and a message at the dedication of the Marion Sprunt Hospital are given a place as follows:

Mrs. M. T. Plyler said:

WELCOME BY MRS. PLYLER

"For more than a year Grace Church has been looking forward to this occasion—when we might have as our guests the loyal spirits of our North Carolina Methodism—these choice souls who are the Marys of the Church in that they have chosen the better part. For after all, the secret of a successful life lies in the wisdom of choice. It consists in the ability to subordinate the little nothings and the non-essentials to the demands of the higher nature.

We welcome you because it delights us to have that commingling of friend with friend; because, in coming to us, as a missionary conference, you enable us to widen the

circle of our friendships and bring us in contact with those strong personalities that enlarge our vision of the world and its people.

We welcome you, because you and we have a common interest in the King's business. In coming together, the whole of us can furnish what each, as an individual, lacks. We can invoke the pentecostal showers that come upon those who, with one accord, await the divine command to go forward.

We, thrice welcome you because you have been with Jesus and learned of Him and have that peculiar gift that means activity of soul. Because in sitting at his feet your heart is overbrimming with love for your Lord until there are certain soul-demands that have to seek an outlet in worshipping Him and in endeavoring to satisfy the needs of His children. So with no leanness of soul, with no barrenness of spirit we come together having all things through Him who loved us and bought us with His own blood.

The city of Wilmington, with its wealth of native forests, enticing those who delight in the live-oak, the palmetto and the graceful over-hanging moss of the semi-tropics, may incline you to conclude that it is not necessary to journey farther south for a delightful winter resort.

The shifting sands, the tossing waves and the foaming billows afford a play-ground for all comers from every point of the compass. Those who find sport in the angler's rod have here a rare opportunity; those who enjoy the foods of the briny deep, the mirth of gay company, the stimulus of the salt sea, have all they seek within easy reach.

But the best of all good things the city has to offer is its people—a cordial, genial, kind people not too busy with their own affairs to have a concern for the affairs of others. Notice the clean city, the work of the health department, and the effort to beautify the town and you will be convinced that the people of the city are united for the com-

mon good of all. Could you but see all of our Dorothy Perkins roses blooming throughout the length of our streets you would know how large a place the aesthetic has in our lives.

The city is ever ready to share its best with all who come. For the city long ago formed the habit of hospitality, welcoming organizations of every nature into her hospitable borders.

Grace Church traces its beginnings back to early Methodist history, the days when Asbury had direct supervision over the "societies." Steadily it has been strengthening until now it is one of the "strongholds" of our Conference, having a membership of more than eight-hundred, earnest, consecrated workers. It is a peculiar joy to have one of our number laboring in distant Korea."

DEDICATION OF CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Rev. M. T. Plyler spoke as follows at the dedication of the Marion Sprunt Hospital—an adjunct of the James Walker Hospital for Women and Children:

Lady Henry Somerset said, "It is a greater service to bear soldiers than to bear arms." It may be said with equal truth: It is better to build such institutions as this than to build battleships. These minister to the needy in these hours when the tides of feelings run too deep for utterances in the frail medium of human speech.

The anxieties and sufferings of motherhood go far beyond the pain and peril of the battlefield. There is nothing in literature like Tennyson's Rizpah. The old mother, with the law against her, with the church against her, with society against her, stands alone against the world holding fast to the dear object made hers in that most sacred hour of birth.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was left—

My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the bones that had laughed and had cried—
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not theirs—they had moved in my side.

Yes, to those who walk in darkness—to those who are alone with God in the dark—unto them hath the light shined; and those who walk in the shadow of death have seen a great light on this hospital hill which is a beacon of hope when the night is darkest. The eye of many an expectant mother will brighten with new hope as she anticipates the relief to be found in this Memorial Hospital for Women and Children.

The heart of the Christian centuries has gathered about the mother and child in the stable at Bethlehem; somehow, a special pathos is found in the fact that "there was no room for them in the inn." But the painful tragedy remains. Among the poor, many a maimed and overburdened mother, a victim of neglect, goes a patient and helpless sufferer through life, bearing the burden of her infirmity, because there was no place like this where skill and loving service could minister in the hour of her sorest need.

A princess "saw the child"; and, moved by the universal appeal that comes to womanhood, she broke over rank and cast and custom. She gave mother and child a chance to live and to grow together in spite of law and race. So Moses came to years. The hard conditions of life and the helplessness of ignorance are often more destructive than Egyptian tyranny. May we not expect this "Memorial" to be the Princess before which the hurt of poverty and ignorance and circumstance will melt away, allowing mothers many and children not a few to live and grow together, saved from many of the ills to which flesh is heir?

May the blessings of heaven and the smiles of the generations following be upon every one who in any way has

contributed to this beautiful memorial and timely benefaction.

PRESENTS WILLIAM J. BRYAN

In presenting Hon. William J. Bryan to a mass meeting in the First Baptist Church, Wilmington, North Carolina, May 12, 1919, M. T. Plyler said:

Once the goings of men were limited by shore lines and mountain chains; but that day is no more. Men's thoughts have widened with the suns and their feet have pressed on to the ends of the earth. Hermit souls and hermit nations are no more.

We have fought to a finish a world-war and we are formulating a League of Nations for world peace. Humanity is above all! Master men are leading the crusade for temperance, for righteousness, and for peace. We are favored with the presence of one of these with us this evening. I present to you the great Commoner, the world-citizen, the prophet of reform for the new era, Hon. William Jennings Bryan.

PRODUCTIVE PERIOD OF MY MINISTRY

ATTENTION GIVEN TO READING AND WRITING

During the years in which I was free from many of the functions of big churches and the exacting calls that often came with the increasing demands of later years, special stress was then put upon reading and writing, along with urgent and important work of the pastorate. Of course, I cherished the conviction that the churches under my care should have the best I could give; but over and above all this, I used valuable time in preparation for demands of future years. This called for reading the best books and led to the desire to discuss themes of general interest.

The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which met in Birmingham, Alabama, May, 1906, appointed a Commission to extend an invitation to other branches of world Methodism for a statement of faith for ecumenical Methodism. At once Methodism and restatement became a live issue. Professor Frederick Loofs of the University of Halle, pronounced this the greatest movement in church history since the Reformation. This at once raised the question in many minds of creed formation for Methodism.

An article of mine discussing "Methodism and Restatement" did not make a ripple in the general discussion, but the hours of reading in the preparation of this paper gave me a knowledge of Methodism that added much to my appreciation of other phases of our church such as the Aldersgate Celebration in 1938. So did a later discussion of mine on "The Impotence of Radical Liberalism" which led a brother in Kentucky to dub me as a defender of

"Old time Methodism." These investigations counted for little in the issues of the day, but the writer profited much by a serious study of these themes and also gained encouragement in his life work.

At this period of my ministry, other articles of general interest were published in newspapers and magazines, among which were articles of travel in parts of western United States, as well as contributions to the *Nashville Christian Advocate,* while Dr. Embree E. Hoss was editor and later during the period when Dr. T. N. Ivey was editor. An article "The South in Theological Thought," published in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* received most favorable comment.

A study of "David in English Drama," part of my work for the M. A. degree at the State University was published in the University Journal of Chapel Hill.

Two of my ventures in fiction were stories of the lowlands in the coast region: "Aunt Jane's Regrets," carried by a North Carolina Daily, and another story of that same section, "Uncle Josh and The Common Lot." These short narratives were written in those early years when circumstances afforded time for living in close touch with the plain people who worshipped God in the rural section of eastern Carolina. I also read and enjoyed the best books coming from the American press.

In the year 1899, while pastor of the Methodist Church at Plymouth, I began writing occasionally for the Raleigh Christian Advocate of which the Reverend Thomas Neal Ivey was the alert young editor. Then began a close friendship which continued to the day of his death in Nashville, Tennessee. He was at that time, editor of the Christian Advocate, the General organ of the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Through the years, I wrote editorials for him as editor of both the Advocates, the one published at Raleigh and

the other at Nashville. The following editorial for the RALEIGH CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE was written and published prior to the meeting of the General Conference in Asheville, North Carolina, May, 1910 in a special General Conference issue of the North Carolina Methodist paper.

GENERAL CONFERENCE LEGISLATION
(Editorial)

However important the elections and enactments of the General Conference may be for the general welfare of our Methodism, far above these, and superior to all else, is the assurance of the fathers that "God is with us." This was best of all in Wesley's day, and remains so in this year of our Lord. Without it, our machinery is a body of death and our words like clanging cymbals. Blessed is that nation or that church able to see the hand of God in its history and to hear the voice of God speaking through its great men!

The new stress on the method of the world's life and the widely advertised theory of evolution endanger faith in the old conviction that God is a living factor and force in this world, thereby substituting a godless world for one of order and intelligence. Fearful would be the loss of this our precious heritage! Glorious is the life able to see God in the common bush on the edge of the desert, for only he who does will walk with unsandaled feet over the common ways of life, realizing that earth is crammed with heaven. A nation stung with the splendor of such a vision must ultimately struggle into the light and liberty of the children of God. Our hope in the fearful unrest of this age springs from the conviction that God is moving in new, strange ways through this mysterious old world.

A like assurance applies to the old Book, so potential in national life and in individual character. New theories of inspiration, changed views about the character, date, and authorship of many of the books of the Bible, and disputings about the formation of the Canon too often result in taking

God out of the Bible. Pathetic beyond measure is such to the man who once heard God in the Book, now dumb to him. It means his undoing.

Blessed is he who can journey with Abraham, follow Moses to Nebo, stand with Elijah in those apostate days, follow the measures of the Psalmist, or hear the great prophet messages, and realize that God is in it all. Whether ultra-conservative or radically liberal, whether low critic or high critic, matters little if in the Book God has a message for the soul.

Along with the conviction that God is a living presence in the world and a living voice in the Bible comes the assurance of an abiding force in life. Once God comes consciously close to men their hearts burn within them and a new sense of Deity moves them to new endeavor.

We should be most zealous in guarding this feature of early Methodism. Wesley began here and his words rang clear and true. He did satisfy the religious instincts of the masses and stir strange new emotions when the skeptics had nothing to say and most of the clergy nothing worth saying. It was the day of the Deists. Sermons were largely lectures on metaphysics or disquisitions on morals. "The distinct realization," says Leslie Stevens, "of a supernatural Being constantly intervening in the natural affairs of life was no longer possible." The effort to steer between superstition on the one hand and fanaticism on the other, to escape believing too much or appearing over-much righteous enervated religious thought and paralyzed religious life. A system of abstract rules prevailed. The note of authority was gone, for the sense of Deity was no more. As a power and a presence God was no more with them. How strange sounded the declaration that God comes in direct contact with the soul and moves as a purifying power in life and a regenerating agency in society! The dull moralizing and feeble platitudes gave place to thrilling

experiences from those in conscious touch with God—a God able to make all men holy in heart and life. So, the wicked, unchurched masses heard, wept, and prayed, thrilling others with the new experiences begun. They sang their songs, enjoyed their religion, and told others how God had come into their lives to make all things new. Old things had passed away. On both sides of the water a new note was heard. It was God in the soul of the believer. God called men to preach, and God moved men and women to tell what He had done for them. The God-called preachers among God-filled men and women moved with the swing of conquest. They awoke echoes in the cabins and set up Bethels in the waste places of America as the neglected wandered in the wilderness and pushed on over the plains, ignorant of God and without hope in the world. Better than a hard and fast ecclesiastical system is a burning heart eager to adjust itself to the demands of the hour, if by so doing some soul can be made to know God. We of the Wesleyan movement should hold dear the secret of our conquering march from the hour God touched the heart of Wesley to this present moment. The best of all is, God is with us and in us.

If God remain in the world, in the Book, in experience, a living presence and power, one need not grow anxious about scientific theories, Biblical criticism, or conference enactments. While the heart holds true to the real things, no fear need be felt for the changes that come in the small affairs of life. Even the radical efforts of those who make the conservative fear and tremble will do small hurt in our Methodism while we hold to the good old conviction that God is with us. This is above conference enactments and marks the stages of our progress. Shall Methodism strive to perfect an existing order or crave uninterrupted fellowship with God and move forth with the steps of a conqueror?

URGE OF LIFE PRIMARILY WITHIN

(A few of my deepest convictions are given briefly in the following four statements. M. T. P.)

Life, both vegetable and animal, in its various forms, is manifest in the world about us. With each recurrence of spring, the whole face of nature undergoes a most marvelous transformation. Through the years this miracle of nature continues, on land, in air and in water. Each of the five geographical zones has its own peculiar flora and fauna. Man, however, is best able to live independent of the forces and influences of nature in the vast and varied domains of earth. Fish swim, birds fly, and beasts roam, but man rises above most every limitation of earth, as he strives to subdue the world and to make conquest of the universe. Man, too, often considers himself the Lord of Creation. He thinks, he admires, he aspires, he plans, he achieves, determined to rise above the dead level of earth.

The book of nature opens wide about man and speaks to him a various language. But superior to the book of nature, is the divine revelation which becomes so full of God and of life in all its forms—the material, the spiritual and the eternal—for God "breathed into man the breath of life and man became a living soul." Life is God's most unique gift; it is not for man to remain in the dust and to be fully content to remain in a fixed abode.

The progress of mankind, as set out in the Bible, in the development of the race, is a record of men acting as did Abraham, who went out not knowing whither he went. The record of the patriarchs is one that tells of the pioneers of destiny, standing on the threshold of history; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their descendants were ever moving on—down into Egypt, up out of the ancient land into the region of the desert, where a new generation with experiences in the desert were qualified to go over and possess the land.

The inner compulsion and the keen sense of God urged this migrant people to go on with their marvelous sense of destiny, constraining them to rely on the loftiest earth has to offer.

Man is certainly at his noblest and best in the realm of the true, the beautiful and the good. Thinkers, artists and saints make possible the libraries, the art galleries and the sanctuaries of the world. The poets, the prophets, and the saints lift man to his loftiest levels in the upward climb. The final and triumphant lot of man is the heaven disclosed by him who is the Resurrection and the life.

To keep fresh and strong this inner urge of man becomes most important in the process of the ages. Often stagnation overtakes man. Civilizations fossilize, religions become formal and peoples are lost in the material, as their ideals perish and life's currents fail. Man lives triumphant only when the outward becomes less and less and the inward is renewed from day to day. Truly, the real vital and enduring processes are always within. "How does your garden grow?" This is the interesting question of the old nursery rhyme. Yes, this is the perennial question of all the ages. The life's process is the result of a wide spread compulsion of the inner urge. The grape hangs on the branch and the potato clings to the roots, but the processes of growth lie far back of the fruits which men gather. In the acorn can be observed *in embryo* the forests on wide stretching hills and far distant mountain sides. The emerald fields of the springtime and the limitless green prairies follow the flow of the deep life currents. In the grain of wheat lies the food for multitudes yet unborn. Seed, soil and sunshine enter in the processes of fostering and of feeding the race; humanity in its origin and in its continued existence relies upon the deep, strong, unseen currents which rise back of the things that do appear for "the seen is transient, the unseen eternal."

RELIGION THE DEEPEST THING ABOUT LIFE

The source of all life, physical, moral and spiritual, is God. In the seed and in the sower of the seed life has its source and fullest fruition. The words of Jesus are, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."—In the seed the life germ is encased and protected, and through the sower life of different types is developed—"Behold, a sower went forth to sow," then in close proximity follows: "The seed brought forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some an hundred-fold."—Such is the parable of the sower.

A child of God as sower scatters the seed for the welfare of the world. God in Christ; God in us; God working in and through us; these are the familiar and fundamental teachings of Christianity. The life of God in man is the light and the life of man, enabling him to do his part in shaping the world for the betterment of men. Thus in man life becomes finely organized, free and effective.

Christianity is life—a life to be organized, protected and developed. What the chaff is to the grain and the hull is to the kernel, the externals of religion are to the growth and development of the religious life. This finds its source and substance in personal fellowship with God in Christ. As the Risen Lord held fellowship with the perplexed souls as they trudged along the dusty road in the twilight of that first Easter day, and as centuries later the Christ met with John Wesley in Aldersgate Street they each came to experience the glowing heart. The externals substituted for the essentials of religion work havoc in any and every age. How the words of Jesus of his day blistered and burned the formalists in religion as they prayed on street corners, gave alms and displayed their fastings to be seen of men! Creeds, moral codes, rites, ceremonies, ecclesiastical forms and organizations have their place, but not the *chief* place in effective Christianity. These are but the chaff, the hull.

An anemic religious life and a faltering Christian pulpit

result largely from the emphasis put upon "The things that perish with the using"; while a red-blooded Christianity gets its vigor from a vivid realization of man's relations to God. Oh, the folly of striving to bring in the new heaven and the new earth by becoming dividers of estates and by restoring personal, earthly relationships between man and man, as though life consists chiefly in the things one may possess and the positions one may hold! Jesus spake with authority and full assurance and not as did the quibbling scribes in their many speculations.

Man's unity with God and man's life from God through Jesus Christ call for a stirring message from God. Good ministers of Jesus Christ can never be content with ethical dissertations and religious homilies. Prophets with a fire in their bones evermore have a living and effective message on their tongues. The Bible, the historic church, and human reason, do then become sources of authority as God reveals himself to them within.

Man is so sorely pressed upon by the gross earth, and life seems to be so entirely dependent upon the material world in which men live and move and have their being that the external too often becomes the chief consideration of the crowd. Fortunately, a few mystical souls to whom the unseen world is very real escape this peril that so weighs down the dull mass of mankind.

The senses—eye, ear, nose, tongue and fingertips—make report of the outer world by day and by night in such a real and persistent fashion that it becomes most natural for mankind to esteem this outer order of first importance and for the materialists to conclude that the material is the all and in all. So the practical man spends his long, weary days dealing with the things that do appear. Life to him naturally becomes a struggle to meet well the needs of today and to secure a surplus for tomorrow.

A little reflection, however, indicates how false and dis-

appointing is this view of life. All who are capable of a backward look and are able to get a glimpse into the future know how truly the best legacies which have come down to the world belong to the unseen—to the spiritual. Fathers and mothers, teachers and preachers, apostles and prophets, poets and dreamers, statesmen and patriots, saints and martyrs have enriched the centuries and have made possible the best in life. These are the real benefactors of earth. In Westminster Abbey and in historic halls of fame not a tablet is placed there because of the vast wealth accumulated. Men live and are remembered not for wealth accumulated, they live and are remembered because of the service rendered the world. The same holds true with those who are able to lead on in the advances of our humanity. Such endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

Life of the spirit works in the deepest depths of the soul and gives religion the first place in the life of the world. Hence the prophets, the saints and the poets exalt religion above the ordinary rounds of earth.

Robert Browning, our most Christian poet, has a supreme and all absorbing interest in the individual soul. Browning's poetry is instinct with the essence of Christianity—with the life of Christ. For him the personality of Jesus Christ is the impregnable fortress of Christianity. Jesus is the Lord of Life: the life of the spirit is the essence of religion.

In the Prologue of the Gospel of St. John are these words: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." So the life of Christ in man is the real essence of Christianity. Here is the answer to the age old question: In what does religion Consist?

SPIRITUAL PIONEERS OUTWARD BOUND

The spiritual pioneer greets us on the threshold of history and at the end of the ages the seer of Patmos gives a vision of the company in white which no man can number.

Early out of Chaldea came Abraham, led by God, whose goings could be traced by the smoke of his altar fires as he journeyed to a land he knew not of. The altar fires and the angel visits by the way indicate the spiritual sensibilities of this early pioneer with vast possessions cherishing the assurance that God would make him the federal head of a mighty people in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Even when his son of promise lay bound on the altar, Abraham's faith failed not.

Later, Moses became a spiritual pioneer able to lead a nation from serfdom to the land of promise. As he turned aside to see that unusual sight on the desert horizon, then came the call of God that rendered the place on which he stood holy ground; this constrained him to cover his face and to walk with unsandaled feet in the divine Presence. So did Isaiah come to know the spiritual cleansing and the divine commission that made him the great court-preacher of Israel. In after times, under the blazing Syrian sun, God revealed his Son in Saul of Tarsus so that he went afar, a spiritual pioneer of the first Christian centuries.

Whether it be angels by the way, a fiery bush on the desert horizon, the splendors of the Temple with its quaking foundations, or the blazing sun on a desert highway, an unusual experience with God makes gloriously effective for conquest the spiritual pioneers of earth. Those pioneers of this later civilization which our fathers knew are no more, and the earthly resources so relied upon by many have failed us. The material mocks us and those earthly towers by which we would rise to the skies end in confusion. Every serious moral and spiritual collapse warns us against relying too much on the things that do appear. Truly, the unseen abides and soul-qualities win in the course of the years.

Spiritual pioneers in the home, in the school and in the church—in these three citadels of our civilization—are ever

more needed. Men such as William Penn in Pennsylvania, Roger Williams in Rhode Island and Francis Asbury in American Methodism embody the deepest longings for God of the Quakers, of the Baptists and of the Methodists. Such spiritual pioneers are the chief need of every hour. The outreach of spiritual pioneers for loftier levels and larger conquests has been characteristic of those girded by God even though they knew it not. The spiritual constraints at the center of the personal energy and the lure of worlds on high hold a chief place in the conquests of the Christian world. Obedience to the heavenly vision and eagerness to follow the gleam lift the individual above the dead level of the commonplace and make man more than a "finished, finite clod untroubled by a single spark." Such are ever eager to reach loftier levels.

The tints of the forests in autumn and the green of the fields in the spring time have their annual message for man. The haze on the hills and the softness over the level landscape and the delicate little flower, coming as a warm pulse-beat from the heart of mother earth, tell of the ever fresh resurgence in all the vast domain of nature. It is the hour of resurrection. This, the harbinger of spring, whispers once more of earth in her most gorgeous attire. Soil, sunshine and air have now felt the touch divine and made their usual response.

Flower, fish, bird and beast have a life peculiarly their own, so each is fully at home in its own element. But man lives in two worlds—the natural and the spiritual. So it is for him to be at home in both. To act well his part, to be at home on earth, is to lift himself above the flower, the fish, the bird and the beast which are largely creatures of their own environment. A man who lives well in both worlds can be at home with God. He rises above his material surroundings to the loftier levels of the soul. Lured by the higher cravings of the spirit he follows the gleam.

Urged by the spiritual emotions within the center of his personality, he develops the saintly character, he knows the joy of living in two worlds as he is more and more at home with God.

Then he can sing songs at midnight. Prison cells become less horrible than the dungeon of oneself. Bunyan in Bedford jail could dwell in the Celestial City. Amid a shower of stones Stephen caught a glimpse of heaven, and the prisoner on Patmos saw a new heaven and a new earth. The saints evermore dream of fellowship with the angels and with the good in fairer worlds on high, for they look for nothing less than gaining new heights every day.

PERSONALITY PUTS THE WORLD FORWARD

Is there such a thing as progress? Evolution says something has happened. You start with protoplasm and go on to something else. So evolution answers the question, yes. Conservatism asserts that in the process nothing is added. There is a perpetual change in form, but there is no change in substance. As in the grain of wheat, nothing does change save the quantity. Nothing different has been added with the development from within outward. Still further; Is there then any such thing as intellectual progress? It is doubtful. Some contend that there is marvelous progress in man's intellectual development; others insist that the modern man has not advanced beyond the ancients who have stolen all our best thoughts. So, the conservatives and the progressives are evermore at odds.

"How then about progress in morals?" Can anyone put his finger on an incident of progress, or produce evidence of real advance? Half a century ago, with the evolutionary changes in full swing, men boasted of the wonderful progress made by the modern nations, especially in Europe and in America. The achievements on every hand, many original, and different gave full assurance of a new order and

a better world. Then, with startling suddenness, the savagery of the world war broke in 1914; to be followed by a still more destructive cataclysm. Just now, a quarter of a century later, the nations writhe and die in this last holocaust. So we are forced to inquire, "Is there such a thing as progress in morals and religion?" If there is such, it must be here. For every great question is fundamentally a religious question. History teaches that every great reform has originated in the religious experience of some individual. Notably, the social movements for the welfare of mankind and far-reaching missionary movements among the nations are religious in their origin. Some insist this is progress; while others assert there is no such thing as progress.

It is well, however, to remember that the fundamental characteristics of human consciousness are unity and variety. Unity expresses itself in the old conviction that change is essential—for stagnation means death. So, we always have with us the two parties: the conservative and the radical—the one representing the *unity,* the other the *variety* of consciousness. So for the conservative all change is dangerous; for the radical, there must be change-progress.

The conservatives cherish the days that are dead. The morning sun has little fascination for them. They are watching the glories gathering about the retreating years and longing for the heroes and heroines that rendered glorious the times forgotten. In estimating their families, more concern is shown for a noble ancestry than is shown for a worthy posterity. If the affair is more personal, they think only of the glories gone and weep over the evil of the later times, mistaking the evening of their own lives for the afternoon of the world. They, growing old and gray, keep an eye upon the lengthening shadows.

Without doubt there resides an element of strength in this characteristic and, also, an element of weakness. Its strength is a steadfast conservatism; its weakness, a lack of

progress. Certainly a great and heroic ancestry is not to be treated lightly, but this is not all. To worship around the tombs of the past is to court decay and death. The eye must evermore be kept upon the future. The progressives have the larger outlook. Though the past be shrouded in gloom, they expect sunshine a little further on. They let the yesterdays go and set their faces for the tomorrows. Such is ever characteristic of youth. The child may be in a rude hut and feed on the coarsest food, yet it will be happy with half a chance. Feeling that this is a friendly world, it has the heart of a bird, ready to sing at the first glint of light. Here is the enchantment and progressiveness of youth; yea, the heroism. Hard-pressed, poorly paid, the youth toils on believing it is better further on, certain of the future. This makes heroes and martyrs. So a nation is always young while its face is to the future. We Americans feel the stirrings of youth in our blood and the glory in our outlook. It is thus with the church, that tarries not at an empty tomb but looks to the One gone before. The conquest has just fairly begun. The church has for its outlook the wide world, as a triumphant Lord urges to the conquest. It is both conservative and progressive.

Man, by the agencies of religion and of truth, is able to put the world forward. The most urgent present day need is a new evaluation of man in the terms of Christ's estimate of personality—Jesus taught that men are better than birds; and that a man is better than a sheep; that men are better than oxen. The acid test of anything and of any movement in the world is its contribution to the development of human personality. For in the forefront of all advance is the man, and back of every movement for advance is the power of personality. Personality alone puts the world forward. The bondage of circumstance is ever with us and the pull of all that has gone before makes itself felt, but the *personal* remains. Race, nation, and family tell mightily in the life

of the generations. There is no escape from the bondage of heredity; the incubus of the past weighs evermore upon us. So do the fetters of the present persist. Climate, topography and the varied forms of group life hold us fast—Still, the conviction abides that man is more than all that has gone before, and he remains daring, hopeful, fully able to buffet the waves of circumstance.

If civilization means anything in the struggle of the race to move forward, it is that man is able to *overcome*. By the processes of education and training, he is enlarged and freed in his own personal life so that he becomes a power for the progress of the race. Thus in a most real way, an institution is the lengthened shadow of a great man. He quickens, he guides, he blesses, or he damns his age.

Thoughts, feelings, ideals embodied become potential beyond all the measurements of a man. The upheavals of the race and the way-marks of the centuries belong to those periods of the new learning and of the new sense of God in the life of man. Man is able to get a first-hand knowledge of God; then watch out for the appearance of a Paul or a Luther or a Wesley. Such men put the world forward. So evident is this that Carlyle held that the history of the world is the history of its great men.

The Idea of Personality as embodied in Browning's Poetry is set forth in these words by Hiram Corson in his "Introduction to Robert Browning: (II. 45, 46)

"A cardinal idea in Browning's poetry is the regeneration of men through a personality who brings fresh stuff for them to mould, interpret, and prove right,—new feeling fresh from God—whose life re-teaches them what life should be, what faith is, loyalty and simpleness, all once revealed, but taught them so long since that they have but mere tradition of the fact,—truth copied falteringly from copies faint, the early traits all dropped away. ('Luria.') The intellect plays a secondary part. Its place is behind the instinctive spiritual antennae which conduct along their trembling

lines, fresh stuff for the intellect to stamp and keep—fresh instinct for it to translate into law."

"A people is but the attempt of many to rise to the completer life of one." ('A Soul's Tragedy.')

In every line of life in the broad sweep of the centuries among the peoples and kindreds and tongues the man is put to the test and the personal element counts in a great way. The individual holds sway.

The personal element in the Minister is certainly of supreme moment. No class of men have to repeat themselves quite so often as the men charged with a message from above. Through the years, the same old story must needs be told over and over again to generation after generation. Even the same sermon often does service for a whole generation. The majority of men have marked out the boundaries of their theological field by the time they reach thirty, and they spend the remaining years within this domain. They literally tell the old, old story over and over again. This, too, in the ears of a people usually able to anticipate the message whole paragraphs ahead, since the pew is often better informed than the pulpit, and even a superior judge of preaching. For in city and town, through the years, the people have listened to sermons of every variety, and in the country, at the several churches of different communions, have they heard the gospel message fashioned in various terms. Thus those in the pew listen to more sermons and often touch life at more points than the men in the pulpit, and are, consequently, more alert, if not equally as well informed, in matters theological and religious. In the very nature of the case, the effectiveness of the pulpit message and its drawing quality cannot be lodged in the ability to present new truth or novel disclosures.

Reliance on "the plain unvarnished truth" is futile. The man careful to give his people the "simple truth" and leave it to work will find that it does not work. He would better be engaged in beating toms-toms in the face of the world.

Jesus never expected to win this world after any such fashion. He relies not so much on the message as on the messenger. "Ye are my witnesses." Flesh and blood are essential to bringing in the kingdom. Modern Unitarianism and Methodism began in America about the same time. Evidently in that day one Unitarian minister could present more of the "simple unvarnished truth" than a round hundred ignorant Methodist preachers, yet Methodism numbers its followers by the millions and has gone everywhere, while Unitarianism is largely confined to a section with a few thousand. Those plain backwoods preachers told a thrilling story out of a striking experience and pressed it home until it won its way. There was flesh and blood, and grace and glory, combined in bearing witness to a few well known facts. No, the "simple truth" turned loose to do its work will not win.

Where, then, is the real power of the pulpit? How is the old well known story to be kept fresh and interesting? Largely through the personal element must this be secured. The effective pulpit cannot ignore the place and power of personality in the world. Out of this comes the force that sets the world forward and marks the real advance in human life. Retrace any great forward movement and soon you run up against some giant personality. Hebrew life goes back to Abraham, Protestantism back to Luther, the Methodist revival back to Wesley, Christianity back to Christ.

The pulpit discounts the personal element at its peril and holds no assurance of effectiveness in dealing with the present or with posterity. One minister charms and grips like a magnet while another is useless as a rope of sand. What is the difference? Usually it is the difference in the man behind the message. That unique something called personality gets in its work. The personal element makes the old story fresh as a May morning and as refreshing as a breath from across the hills. Truth thereby gains a certi-

tude that wins its way into the inner recesses of the human soul and gives the gospel eflectiveness in every land and under every sun.

In the foregoing has been the mental reservation that anyone who is effective in giving potency to the pulpit message, must keep in close and friendly touch with the Eternal. As God comes close, the heart warms, the mind quickens and the message rings clear and full across a people's sin and shame leading men to say "We never heard it on this wise." Truly, no other poetry is so saturated with the essence of Christianity, so dominated by the life of Christ as that of Robert Browning. His buoyant optimism, his vigorous personality, his unwavering faith are most valuable in making a minister. In his writings, the personality of Jesus Christ becomes the real fortress of Christianity.

Well does Hiram Corson exalt the value of "Christmas Eve" in the following paragraph:

"If all Christendom could take this remarkable poem of 'Christmas Eve' to its heart, its tolerance, its Catholic spirit, and, more than all, the fealty it exhibits to the Personality who essentially is Lord of Life, what a revolution it would undergo! And what a mass of dogmatic and polemic theology would become utterly obsolete! The most remarkable thing, perhaps, about the vast body of Christian theology which has been developed during the eighteen centuries which have elapsed since Christ was in the flesh, is, that it is occupied so largely, it might almost be said, exclusively, with what Christ and his disciples taught, and with fierce discussions about the manifold meanings which have been ingeniously extorted from the imperfect record of what he taught. British museum libraries of polemics have been written in defense of what Christ himself would have been indifferent to, and written with an animosity towards opponents which has been crystallized in a phrase now applied in a general way to any intense hate-Odium Theologicum."

BECOMES EDITOR OF THE CHURCH PAPER

A FIRST WORD IN THE NEW ADVENTURE

At the meeting of the North Carolina Conference held in Pittsborough, 1854, there was action taken to organize a joint stock company to publish a religious newspaper and to establish a book store. This is the resolution:

"That a committee of three be appointed, whose duty it shall be as soon as they ascertain that $2,000 of the stock has been purchased, to make proposals to Mrs. Bumpas for the purchase of the *Weekly Message,* and if she refuse to sell, to make the necessary arrangements for the purchase of suitable materials for the publication of a neat, large and respectable paper, to be styled the *North Carolina Christian Advocate,* at $2.00 per annum, strictly in advance; and that they shall issue a suitable prospectus, proposing to issue the first number of said paper on the first of January, 1856; and further that said committee report to the stockholders at their first meeting all the information necessary, as to the most suitable place for the location of the establishment, and on all other matters which they deem important."

Since that venture seventy-one years ago, the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* has continued its course—not always issued from the same place or bearing the same name—for many years it was printed in Raleigh and bore the name of the capital city—but it has been consistently the same paper and devoted to the cause for which it was established.

Rev. R. G. Heflin was the first editor. Since then many men have given their best one way and another to make a paper worthy of the church and the people it was meant

to serve. This has been a hard and exacting task. Through the fierce days of the Civil War and the trying times of Reconstruction, and during the later years of contending factions, the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* has rendered a needed and noble service, but the days ahead should be far better than any of the seventy years gone. A superb physical equipment, a united constituency in a growing commonwealth, and the present demands upon every religious force and influence make possible a worthy contribution to the years ahead.

I have been called to become one in effort with the ever increasing number of those who have been a vital part of the *Advocate* household. It is rather unusual and a unique situation at this time to be associated with one who knew together the common experiences of baby-days and the same hard bumps of childhood's hours, who trudged the same icy trail to the old-field school and splashed together in the same old "swimmin' hole," who ploughed the first furrow the same day and preached their first sermons the same Sunday, who played together on the same football field and graduated from college in the same class. This is not an every-day occurrence. The management has made the unusual venture of trying out twin brothers in the making of a paper.

I have no promises to make; I do, however, cherish certain ideals, and also come with some knowledge of the situation. For more than twenty years I have been officially connected with this paper and during this time I have been a writer of editorials and other contributions for different religious papers. Born and reared within the bounds of the Western North Carolina conference and having spent my active years in the North Carolina conference, in the pastorate and on districts, I have some knowledge of the state. My forbears have been a vital part of this commonwealth for two hundred years, so I feel at home among this

my own people and am glad to continue to have a part in aiding the "people called Methodists" to play their part in these days of golden opportunities now crowding in upon them.

These two great conferences, with Duke University in their very center and the Duke Foundation contributing to their upbuilding, should have the best *Advocate* in the entire Methodist connection, unreservedly devoted to forwarding every interest and to fostering all that makes for civic righteousness and religious devotion.

The devotion of the noble dead, the labors of the heroes living, the issues crowding upon us in North Carolina, the boys and girls gathering about our altars and the radiance on the hilltops, all constrain me to pledge my best.

M. T. Plyler

Following the foregoing statement which appeared in this *Advocate* eighteen years ago when M. T. Plyler was elected editor, Dr. H. C. Sprinkle, Jr., became editor of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate* in which he made this announcement concerning the work of the former editor of the paper and certain further plans for the future of the *Advocate.* His announcement follows:

Dr. M. T. Plyler Takes a New Relation

Dr. M. T. Plyler, for eighteen years joint editor and manager with his brother of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate,* retired from that responsibility with the close of the North Carolina Annual Conference at Goldsboro last Sunday. He has agreed, however, at the request of the new editor and manager and with the hearty approval of the Methodist Board of Publication, Inc., to continue to serve the paper for at least six months longer as Contributing Editor and Director of the Advocate Endowment Fund. That fund, which now amounts to more than $40,000, is

expected to grow to the announced goal of $100,000 during these six months. Both conferences have endorsed the plan of raising the fund through askings from each pastoral charge of an amount equal to five per cent of the pastor's annual salary as of one year ago. The quota for each charge is not an assessment but a modest goal which has already been reached by many charges and which, if generally adopted, will make the total sum easy of attainment. This effort to secure the future welfare of the paper has been an interest close to Dr. Plyler's heart, and its achievement will be a tribute to his foresight and wisdom.

The North Carolina Conference, meeting last week at Goldsboro, where Dr. M. T. Plyler first joined it fifty-three years ago, gave him and his twin brother, Dr. A. W. Plyler, a rising vote of appreciation for their outstanding service to the Church and especially to North Carolina Methodism. Dr. Plyler's historical address, which outlined the historical background of the present Church-wide Crusade for Christ, was regarded by many who heard it as one of the most valuable papers presented at the conference session. It will doubtless appear in these pages, as will other contributions from the vigorous pen of this remarkable man.

The new editor, conscious of the responsibilities which fall upon his shoulders as he takes charge of the paper and the management of the publishing concern which has been so long under the wise and capable direction of the Plyler brothers, is grateful indeed that Dr. M. T. Plyler is to carry on during this critical period of adjustment. Dr. Plyler was associated with the *Raleigh Christian Advocate* for many years before that organ was merged in the establishment of the present state-wide journal. He has had more to do with the making of the paper than perhaps any other one man; and it is fortunate that he is still able, after fifty-three years in the ministry, to continue his fine service in the new relationship.

M. T. PLYLER PRESENTS THE IVEY PORTRAIT

Speaking for Mr. J. B. Ivey, of Charlotte, in presenting a portrait of the late Reverend George Washington Ivey, for fifty-two years an itinerant Methodist Circuit Rider, and for whom there is endowed at Trinity College the Ivey Chair of Biblical Literature, the speaker said:

"George Washington Ivey, born of sturdy and heroic stock, reared among a plain and God-fearing yeomanry, called of God to the life of a Methodist preacher, gave without stint fifty-two years of unbroken service in the hard and obscure rounds of an itinerant Methodist preacher. A full half century spent on circuits spread over the Carolina hills permitted slight acquaintance with the easy places and allowed little fellowship with men in soft raiment. Hard work, plain living, and much prayer were the habits of his life. Such is a severe, obscure and limited life for men bound by parallels of latitude and circles of longitude; but George Washington Ivey knew not the limits of such earthly measurements. He was at home with God and a part of that noble company that walks every highway of earth and crosses the leagues of every sea.

Dr. J. C. Calhoon Newton, President of the Kwansei Gakuin, Japan, testifies that he first knew young Ivey as a junior preacher on a circuit in South Carolina. In after years they were together at the General Conference at Memphis and formed a part of a group that gathered for early morning prayers, but among them all, said he: "I never heard a man pray like 'Uncle Ivey.'" Could the many he turned to righteousness and the noble men he sent into the Ministry speak they would give added testimony, proclaiming the potency and sweep of this life that now knows no frontier.

The messages of the prophets of old were as a fire shut up in their bones; they could but speak. This still makes the preacher and the prophet. A message akin to that of

the olden times burned in the heart of this knightly souled circuit-rider. He was worthy to ride in the front ranks of the devoted followers of Francis Asbury. So brave, so faithful to duty, and so true to God, he was evermore reminding men of Elijah. Through storm and sunshine, in winter's cold and summer's heat, going for fifty-two years without a holiday, this untiring worker came to know the trials and vicissitudes common to many of earth's good and great. On and over the rough-winding ways of life, pressed this friend of the people and servant of God sure at all times that the stars were shining.

Men did not treat lightly the words of this modern seer. For as he spoke with flaming soul and enraptured face the spirit world became awfully real. With divine afflatus upon him, his was the shining face of the men who have been in the mount with God. But the touch of that life and the radiance of that face are no more felt and seen along the by-ways and the highways of the world. Fortunate, indeed, is Trinity, to have this reminder of George Washington Ivey displayed before the eyes of each generation of college youth.

Young Ivey got his training in the big world university where the masses of America learn the lessons of life. He had slight acquaintance with the schools; yet he was ever a learner. Furthermore, he was a promoter and patron of schools and colleges. Few families have more college graduates than his. His children and grandchildren are at home in college halls and academic groves. Ivey is a familiar name around Trinity. What could be more appropriate than for this portrait of "Uncle Ivey," the greatest of the Ivey clan, to have a place at Trinity College?

TOAST GIVEN BEFORE THE DURHAM ALUMNI

In a response to the toast, "Football in ye olden time" at a banquet given the Squad of 1920 at Trinity College by the Durham Alumni, December 14, 1920, M. T. Plyler said:

"Friends, countrymen, lovers, if you have tears, prepare to shed them now, as we here and now recall the ancient days. I come to tell you of the glorious, good old days when the women were queens; the men, heroes; and the football teams, champions. Trinity at the time touched only the high places and walked only with the great in those victorious days of old when football traditions were in the making.

A daring man out of the North land came to a little college in the South land. He knew something of the spirit and prowess of victorious Yale. This he made known to the boys in the woods of Randolph County. So by the efforts and inspiration of John F. Crowell, Trinity pioneered the way for later football in North Carolina. Soon the little college in the woods gave Carolina and Wake Forest a dose of football valor and they began to sit up and take notice—more than this—Trinity gained a new place in their respect. After a few severe drubbings on the football field, their lofty spirit of toleration gave place to respect.

Oh, those were trying days! We did not have the inspiration and the advantages of careful scientific coaching, but we did have the spirit and determination to win. We hit them quick and we hit them hard, and then we would repeat the dose. After they were well shaken, we would give them another round. So victory perched, following rash dosing.

The squad of '90 that played Virginia in Richmond, the first interstate game of the South, can never forget the terrors of the Virginia onslaught. Trinity was unaccustomed to any such—"It was Virginia to the right of us, Virginia to the left of us, and Virginia in front of us"—In the end, it was bruises to the right of us, it was bruises to the left of us, and bruises behind us. Never did Carthagenian swear eternal vengeance on Rome more certainly than did Trinity on Virginia following that first meeting on the James. Soon

the nemesis fell to the surprise of the victors from Charlottsville. We were like a certain wise man who jumped into a bramble bush and scratched out both his eyes, and when he saw his eyes were out he jumped into another bush and scratched them in again. Next year to their astonishment, we licked them, 20 to 0.

Two things I learned in those days—which remain with me:

1. It takes sense and grit and the determination to win to make a football player. The man who does not have these elements would better give himself to croquet. These are just as essential to victory as tough steak used to be to the success of an old time college boarding house.

2. It is fully as religious to play football as it is to read Greek. Some of my friends thought it entirely out of place for a "theologue" to be a member of the football team. "Oh! the horrors of it!" said they.

My conviction after a quarter of a century is that if we could put every able-bodied young preacher through a course in football, we could put up a better fight against the world and the flesh and the devil on the gridiron of life. Often victory would perch on our banners in the forward march of Zion.

PRESBYTERIAN AND METHODIST FELLOWSHIP LEAGUE SUGGESTED

Greetings at the Centennial Celebration of the First Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, North Carolina, 1917, by M. T. Plyler, pastor of Grace Methodist Church of Wilmington to the Synod there in Session:

Mr. Chairman and Brethren,

> One hundred years is a long time in the life of an individual; but a century marks only the morning time of an institution. Especially true is this of the Presbyterian church—that democratic system founded upon

government by Elders—if we may be allowed to lay claim to all the "Elders" mentioned in the Bible.

Elders! We find them scattered all through the Old and New Testament. When God sent Moses down into Egypt to deliver his people, he said, "You call the elders together and tell them that I have sent you." When Joseph went up to bury his father "all the elders of the land of Egypt" went up with him. So the church in Egypt must have been Presbyterian. When Ezekiel was down in Babylon by the Chebar, "the elders sat before him." Presbyterians in Babylon! In New Testament times, we read of the elders in the church at Jerusalem. Presbyterians in Jerusalem! Peter, whom Rome claims, says he was a Presbyterian: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." Paul went everywhere preaching and ordaining elders. So, he must have been a Presbyterian, too. John got a glimpse beyond, and reports that he saw "four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment," close up to the throne. They must have been Presbyterians, though they sang like Methodists.

Be that as it may, as to the Presbyterians in Egypt, or in Babylon, or in Jerusalem, or in heaven, the fact remains that they are a mighty force for the coming of the kingdom of our God here on earth in the Twentieth Century.

The *Bible,* the *Magna Carta* of the Kingdom of God; the *Sabbath* and the *Family,* the two institutions that have come to us from Eden, ever find heroic defenders among all who hold the Presbyterian system. No one of the household can go beyond the Southern Presbyterians in loyalty to God's book, God's day, and God's institution. Chief among all, let it be said with utmost sincerity, in all these high virtues are those with whom we meet on this triumphant occasion.

I count myself highly privileged in being commissioned to bring you greetings this good, glad day. A hundred years of Christian service in one community is not to be lightly esteemed, but when it comes to a service reaching around the planet, the work becomes notable. All honor to such saints. May their tribe increase!

I bring you felicitations from a Communion that lays no claims to an ancient order. We go not back to Egypt or Babylon or Jerusalem. Our citizenship is above. We lay no claim to a New Testament form of ritual or polity, and we have no elaborate system of doctrine. A few fundamentals that could be preached anywhere, by men often deprived of theological training, characterized the Wesleyan movement. That all men may be saved and when a man is saved he will know it, backed by an experience corroborative, made a most effective message. So our stress has been on life rather than on ritual or dogma. We have always cherished a broad and liberal spirit willing to recognize anyone who would be a fellow-laborer in saving men from their sins. The same spirit has been asked of others that all we might join hands in a common cause.

May I not be allowed to add that the simple doctrines preached, the liberal spirit cherished, and the men and methods used, under the blessings of God, have enabled us to encompass the world, as we sang our songs and sometimes shouted our shouts, in the forward march with our brethren of other communions.

We would count it a high honor to form a league with you, offensive and defensive, for another hundred years, that we may show ourselves devoted allies to cross the continents and to sail the seas under the white banner of Him before whom ultimately every knee must bow. And we would here express the belief that the

followers of John Calvin and of John Knox will be one with the followers of John Wesley when we come to join in that great company which Saint John saw of those who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

THIRTY-TWO YEARS OF NORTH CAROLINA PASTORS' SCHOOL

The first session of this School was held in June, 1918. Since that time the Sessions have been held regularly each year at Duke University except during the World War when the school met at Greensboro College. Of that first session in 1918, President W. P. Few wrote:

"The two conferences have started a movement of well nigh illimitable possibilities." Then he adds, "Few enterprises of any kind with which Trinity College has ever been connected have given me so much satisfaction and filled me with such hope as this school that has just closed. This school established by the two conferences of the Methodist Church in North Carolina held its first session this year and this first session was an unbounded success from every stand point. One hundred and eighty preachers coming from all parts of North Carolina, 64 of them undergraduates, registered for graduate or undergraduate courses. In addition to the work of the class-room these ministers and the large number of visitors attended early morning and vesper services and twice a day heard some of the foremost teachers, preachers, and platform men in the United States.

"The two conferences worked heartily together for the success of this joint undertaking. As one of the most distinguished speakers remarked one day, it was impossible to distinguish the men of the West from the men of the East. Members of the two conferences seemed to work with equal earnestness for the interests of the school and to take equal pride in its fine achievements. And this is another

link to bind us all in a closer fellowship of sympathy and service in the common cause.

"For this summer school, I am sure, a great deal of usefulness has been providentially opened up; and from this opportunity, I feel equally sure, neither conference will ever withdraw. The two conferences have started a movement of well nigh illimitable possibilities. Our common Methodism in North Carolina is more and more realizing the great tasks God has laid upon us and is more and more ready to meet these tasks.

"If, in conclusion, I may be allowed a personal word, I should like to say that few enterprises of any kind with which Trinity College has even been connected, have given me so much satisfaction and filled me with such hope as this school that has just closed. To carry forward this undertaking in all its implications and to the uttermost limit of its possibilities I ask for the full cooperation of both conferences and I pledge my own utmost endeavor."

All who have followed the work done and watched its influence during the development of Duke University must admit that our Methodism in the state and beyond has come into a finer sense of unity and a more liberal attitude of mind by contact with the notable men who have made their contribution in class room and on platform during these years.

As President of the Board of Management from its organization to the present time and for the most part in attendance upon the Annual Sessions, I am able to testify to the work done and of the many assembled from all sections of the state and beyond who have been able to enjoy these occasions and to profit by the work done. Leaders from all sections of the nation and across the water have made their contributions to the thought life of the ministry in the state and nation. The early dream of President W. P. Few has been realized over and over again through the more than three decades of this Pastors School.

Chapter Five

AN ESTIMATE OF WILL ROGERS

On the morning of the fatal day marked by the tragic death of Will Rogers, having arrived in Greensboro, North Carolina, on a Southern train, I at once hurried from the station to the office of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate*—At that hour the streets for four city blocks were usually crowded filled with noise and tumult. Now they were more like a funeral procession as men spoke in subdued tones one to another inquiring "Have you heard the terrible news that Will Rogers was killed in a plane crash this morning?" Surprise and horror shadowed the faces of the crowd as they exclaimed, "This surely is not true"—"What a loss to the world"—many exclaimed as the news spread along the streets into the business houses—That moment I realized as never before Will Rogers was the idol of the American people.

The story of the tragic death of Will Rogers that summer night in the far northland on that far-away outpost of civilization of North America was sent out by Sergeant Morgan to the War Department at Washington as he had gathered it from Oakpeha, an Eskimo seal-hunter who saw the air-plane crash.

Through the years prior to the death of Will Rogers, I had read almost daily something in the papers of the daily doings and sayings of Will Rogers. Only once had I seen or heard him in one of his inimitable performances on the stage. This occasion was one night in the largest theatre in Durham, North Carolina. The house was crowded to the utmost as the hundreds jammed into that hall sat unconscious of the flight of time for one hour and

forty minutes. Now I am free to confess that no other man had ever rendered me so oblivious to all that was going on around me as he swept at will the vast multitude so entranced by the outpourings of wisdom and fun of this marvelous man. I then and there became convinced that Will Rogers was the most complete embodiment of our common humanity in our American life.

The next issue of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate,* Aug. 22, 1935, carried on the front page my editorial tribute to this great lover of all mankind—

WILL ROGERS NOBLE EMBODIMENT OF
OUR COMMON HUMANITY

The press in announcing his death said: "A cowboy's drawl, a shy grin and a mirthful tongue that convulsed king and commoner alike made Will Rogers an international favorite." Men high in statecraft, aviation, dramatics and sports pronounced him humorist, entertainer, philosopher, friend and typical American. But none of these nor all of them explain Will Rogers any more than does the declaration that Washington was the first American, Lincoln, the typical American, or Shakespeare, an Elizabethan Englishman, explain the Father of his Country, the Great Emancipator or the Bard of Avon.

Something more than a drawl, a grin and a mirthful tongue made this Oklahoma cowboy, proud of his Cherokee blood, the intimate friend of presidents, monarchs, dictators, captains of industry and statesmen, to say nothing of millions in every walk of life who never laid eyes on him or felt the touch of his friendly hand. Will Rogers knew not the limits of land or clime. In him was embodied the soul of our common humanity that made appeal to the universal soul, enabling him to say in the epitaph he suggested for his tomb, "I never met a man I didn't like." Such a soul gave to our universal humanity a man the whole world claims for its own.

The Christian world says of the man of Galilee that in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. We love to think of this man of the western plains, so wonderfully human and wholly natural in all he said and did, that in him dwelt the best of our ordinary humanity. This gave Will Rogers the universal touch and disclosed to the average man that which is above crowns and royal blood, a simple faith and a kind heart. In the words of his dear friend, Fred Stone, loving him, missing him, we give him to the ages.

Of this came the following letter of information—

WALTER HYAMS AND COMPANY
Newspaper Clippings
From United States and Foreign Papers
NEW YORK

Dr. M. T. Plyler, Editor October 18, 1935
The North Carolina Christian Advocate
Greensboro, North Carolina

Dear Doctor Plyler:

We are in receipt of your esteemed letter of October 17th, and appreciate your kindness in forwarding to this office two copies of the issue containing the editorial tribute in memory of Will Rogers.

We do not know whether you are aware that we are arranging for Fred Stone the complete record in compilation form of the clippings and editorials which have appeared since Will Rogers' death. This comprises to date more than 2,000 pages and we think so much of your editorial that we take pleasure in letting you know that your editorial in the "North Carolina Christian Advocate" will be on the opening page. It really is a classic and our purpose in asking for two additional copies is because we would like to retain one in this office and the other we will frame and forward to Fred Stone. We are sorry indeed that we did not observe it when the paper came out because we would have sent it immediately to the "Daily Oklahoma" at

Oklahoma City and the Claremore Oklahoma Progress, and if you have any more in card form we would like to receive a few and we will forward them to several of the leading newspapers. It may perhaps be a little too late but at any rate it is worth preserving. May we suggest that you send one of the cards to the Hon Jesse H. Jones, the chairman of the Rogers Memorial Committee in Washington, D. C. In the meantime we will await the receipt of the two copies and with keen appreciation for your courtesy, we beg to remain,

Very sincerely yours,
Walter Hyams and Co.

WALTER HYAMS PLACES PLYLER'S "TRIBUTE" FIRST

In a later letter from Walter Hyams and Company, March 5th, 1937, he informed me as to his work of securing the clippings concerning Will Rogers:

"We completed more than 2,000 pages which comprised eleven volumes and your tribute appeared on the first page. This memorial is highly treasured by the Rogers family. . . . It may interest you to know that we still receive inquiries for further copies of the tribute to Will Rogers.

Again, April 15, 1937, this further observation appeared in this Christian Advocate:

GOD SET ETERNITY IN THE HEART OF WILL ROGERS

Born at Oologah on the vast open spaces of the Indian Territory, Will Rogers roamed afar over land and sea until that fateful day in Alaska, when a grief-stricken world received the news of his tragic death. Too soon, it seemed to most of us, had he come to the end of the trail. Equally at home in all lands under every sun, this marvelous man, whether in the upper air or on the long, lonely trails of his Indian forebears, moved on the common level of our ordinary humanity. The elements of time and of eternity, of

earth and of heaven, blended into a wonderful unity in the soul of Will Rogers.

Could a more appropriate setting be found for the "Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun" than that on the range of the Rocky Mountains near the base of Pike's Peak? Built on the famous Cheyenne mountain of material that will endure, it must be suggestive evermore of both the earthly and the eternal.

Most appropriate at the base of the one hundred foot shaft is the Will Rogers Chapel. Significantly is it written, "This will be open to all mankind." We like to think of this chapel as the "Holy Place" of this memorial, since the heart of Will Rogers was ever open to all mankind.

Under the open heavens of those empty Colorado skies, with their pulsing stars, this chapel, done to cherish the memory of a man who was the true embodiment of our common humanity, has a fit setting. Well may its door stand wide open, inviting all mankind to wait and worship in this "Shrine of the Sun," built to the honor of one in whose heart God had set eternity. M. T. P.

Then Followed this Later Observation:

THE WILL ROGERS SHRINE OF THE SUN

A little chapel is to be a part of the Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun which is nearing completion on a promontory of famous Cheyenne Mountain above Broadmoor Hotel, just south of Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Will Rogers chapel and shrine will be everlasting as the mountains and as steadfast as the sun.

This beautiful silver shaft stands out—like the man it honors. Its base is imbedded in the backbone of the nation, on the front range of the Rocky Mountains. Its spire kisses the Colorado sky. It is away from the busy world; it affords peace and quiet; it is almost part of God's great mountains; it commands meditation; it is dignified and picturesque,

seemingly a link between the earthly imprints of the famous humorist, and his celestial home.

The granite tower, resembling a feudal castle was conceived and entirely financed by Spencer Penrose, Colorado Springs pioneer and friend of Mr. Rogers. It was designed by Charles E. Thomas and built by Milton J. Strong.

The spire is a genuine castle in the air, reached by the "ladder-to-the-sky" Broadmoor-Cheyenne highway which zigzags up the face of Cheyenne Mountain. It contains only materials that will endure. There are no nails and no wood in the construction. More than 5,000 cubic yards of light pink granite was taken from a large single boulder near the memorial to make the tower walls.

By night the shrine will be flood-lighted as a sparkling gem studded against the velvet of night. From the pinnacle will burn a sodium light, with provision for it to shine perpetually. There are four rooms in tier inside the shrine, connected by a spiral stairs leading to an observation alcove on the top. At the base of the 100-foot shaft will be the Will Rogers chapel, open to all mankind.

Another of the rooms will be the Will Rogers Memorial Room. Davidson, an American sculptor who was a close friend of Mr. Rogers, is now completing an oversize bust of Mr. Rogers, in his Paris studio for the memorial room.

Randall Davy, noted Santa Fe artist, is painting the history of the West on the interior walls. The frescoes are arranged so that visitors may follow the history chronologically by ascending the stairs. Davey will probably do the religious paintings in the chapel before the memorial is dedicated next summer. Thousands have already visited the shrine, under construction for 28 months.

Around the shrine is a five-acre sanctuary filled with native Colorado flowers and evergreens.

Mr. Rogers had stood on the knoll where the memorial

has been built at the 9,000-foot elevation. Just two miles from the shrine is the base of Pike's Peak, the snow-capped mountain sighted in 1806 by Lieut. Zebulon M. Pike as he camped with his troops at Fort Pueblo, 42 miles to the southeast. Pike and a handful of followers tried to scale the high peak, but they unsuspectingly ascended Cheyenne mountain, discovering their error when they rested on the promontory now marked by the Rogers shrine.

Pike told his exhausted troopers that the peak which took his name could never be scaled by man. Its rugged crown raised above timberline to 14,109 feet. Pike was wrong, because Spencer Penrose, the same man who built the Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun, built the famous cog railroad and the world's automobile highway to the summit of Pike's Peak.

The shrine was named "Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun" because it often is shut off from the world when tufts of white clouds float between it and the plains half a mile below. The sharp angles catch the sun, especially in the late afternoon as the sun drops behind the lofty peak, which break the sunlight into spears of crimson which play upon the granite memorial and chapel.

EXPANDING HORIZONS

The hard conditions, the limited opportunities and the few encouragements for the citizens during the exacting period following the Civil War along with the ordeal of Reconstruction offered slight encouragement to the people of the South.

As one who lived through those decades so well remembered in Dixie, I certainly know what it was to live and work under the embarrassment of these trying times. For this youngster in his formative years to make the most of such a hard and exacting situation in preparing for life put him to a severe test. Most assuredly this young minister of the Gospel, has striven to do his best in promoting life, religion and the general welfare of the church.

Through the years as a faithful minister of the Gospel, as an eager student in the schools, and as a diligent writer for the press increments of value have resulted tending to expand my mental horizon during the decades.

The following articles are somewhat typical of some of my writings during the later years of my life.

EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE

(Address by M. T. Plyler at the Ecumenical Conference, London, 1927)

Evangelical theology can be lived and preached and sung. It roots itself in experience and works itself out in personal relationships. In the golden days of camp-meeting glories in America the old circuit-rider had preached one of his great evangelical sermons; this was followed by prayers and songs and exhortations and shoutings. The waves of

religious fervor rolled out over the multitudes until "Uncle Joe," the good old colored man who kept the camp, joined in the general rejoicing. Whereupon the old preacher cried aloud, "That's right, Uncle Joe, when you get to heaven you will be just as white as any of us." This added to the exultation, as the old colored brother shouted, "Bless de Lord, I feels de white a-comin' now."

This plain man of simple faith in the forests of America was dreadfully conscious of God as a power in his own life. He had come into fellowship with Abraham building his altar under the stars, and with Jacob having naught but a stone for a pillow as the angels ran up and down the ladder of the skies. Moses walking with unsandaled feet as the bush flamed and burned on the desert horizon, or Isaiah awed amid the glories of the temple, were not more sure of God than was he. To him God was a presence, God was a power, God was an experience.

Experience brings us to the core of personality and has to do with the whole field of personal relationships. This is the very essence of our Christianity. Dogmas and creeds gain a place whenever men begin to think about religion; forms of worship develop whenever religious life externalizes itself; and institutions take shape with the years; but these are not the inner core of religious life. Place and time and externals count for little. It is not in this mountain or in that. The living fountain within counts. Though marred and broken was the life touched by the weary messenger who sat on the curb of the wayside well, she knew the potency of the personal touch, and went away saying, "He told me all that ever I did." Her past lived again; her soul was stirred to its deepest depths. With the personal touch a new life began.

A theology that roots itself in experience and works itself out in personal relationships is of universal appeal. It is sufficiently individualistic to touch the inmost core of

every life and universal enough to sweep the limits of all personal being. It is the flower in the crannied wall over and over again.

Whatever one may think about reality in its entirety—as to the external and internal world—there is no escaping the existence of a something, and along with this something—call it material or spiritual, or call it material and spiritual—there is the acknowledgment of a knower that makes aware of this something called reality. So there is the knower and the something known. More than this. There is the recognition of almost infinite multiplicity in this vast something we call reality. Now there must be a something that unifies this multiplicity, that brings in this sense of oneness. This unifying process is an essential element of the knower; and knowing is an element of personality. Thus this vast and varied universe becomes one, and is bound together in one consciousness—an absolute intellect. But the essential thing of personality is more than intellect. There is the active something called *will* which sits supreme over all—that something known as the supreme arbiter of being. You can make me do many things, but you cannot make me to will to do anything. Will is at the basis of personality and gives merit to action. "Not what I do, but what I would do, comforts me."

What shall we say, then, of this multiplicity which we call reality or being but that it is an Infinite Will in action? And all this vast and varied being seems to be working together. Is this not a Supreme Personality that works in relation to finite personalities destined ultimately to be brought into harmonious action? "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." This is not Pantheism on the one hand, nor Materialism on the other. Pantheism denies the personality of God and the freedom of man; Materialism has no place for an active intelligence. Here is an active, intelligent being at work. God works; Jesus works; and

all things work together for good in love. It is a matter of personal relationship unified in the bonds of love. So the master-word in evangelical theology is, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." One day Jesus met a man who had few friends in Jericho. This man was hated for his trade, and hated the more for the success he met with in his hated trade. No respectable man would call upon Zacchaeus. Seriously alone was he, and under condemnation by God and man. Jesus said to the little man—but the big sinner—up a tree, "Come down and I will be your guest." That day a new life began with Zacchaeus. The depths were stirred; the past ceased to be; God abode with him. On another day, in a most respectable place—a Pharisee's house—a great sinner wept and poured out her tears and ointment, as she wiped His feet with the hair of her head. Jesus received her in His own gracious way; then a new faith and hope and love were born.

When Jesus touches the soul as Saviour, and establishes a personal relationship, a new life begins. In Him a real oneness of the human and the divine is possible for all the world. For, somehow, wherever men feel and think and act, wherever men suffer and doubt and sin, wherever the finite yearns for the infinite, there arises a sense of need, and men do welcome a saviour.

But the way of approach to God is not easy. Men by searching do not find God. The age-long accumulations of the nations which have forgotten God, and the barriers built up through the centuries by those who feel after Him, have made it hard for men to find their way to God. Even in Christian lands, among the followers of the Christ who came to show us God, are voices and dogmas and ecclesiasticisms that shut out God. Too often stress is placed upon a memorial stone by the wayside of the past rather than upon the growing, expanding mustard seed; upon a Nicodemus, with his questionings, rather than upon the

little child used by Jesus as the real subject of the kingdom.

All that isolates or tends to separate from God must give place to a genuine oneness made possible in a living experience arising out of a conscious personal relationship. Fortunately, the instincts of the average man are sound when it comes to a belief in God and in an overruling providence, as well as in the certainty of life after death. These are fundamental in his convictions, and anyone who speaks with authority here not only gets a hearing, but he gets a response. Deep calls unto deep. Consequently, the message that comes out of a deep and a genuine experience reaches the heart. Shoddiness and mere pretense count for naught. With blistering words of hot indignation did Jesus rebuke those who did not ring true—the men who made a pretense. For all such the doom is certain. At this point theologians are especially exposed. Only a living, personal experience keeps theology fresh and strong and evangelical. This is the well-spring.

Experience is writ large in the Christian centuries. Back of all the achievements of the years are the throbbing hearts of master-spirits awfully conscious of God. Paul pioneered the way for a world-wide religion and forged chains of logic strong enough to bind the world to the throne of God; but beneath all this thought and action lived that thrilling, throbbing soul so sure of God. Mightily moved was he by the need which he saw about him and by the Macedonian call that came from across the sea. Augustine, one of the greatest theologians of the Christian centuries, yearns after God. Though about his life and works gathered an ecclesiastical system which became a body of death to the Christian Church for a thousand years, yet back of all this accumulation tending to mar the work of Augustine lived a man eager for God. "Unquiet is our heart," says Augustine, "until it finds rest in Thee." Luther rose in revolt against the whole system of mediation that intervenes between man

and God, because he, an Augustinian monk, had learned that the soul of man, naked and unafraid, can by faith, without the mediation of priest and sacrament, approach God. In the day of the Deists, when God had ceased to be a living presence among men, Wesley testified God does live in and move among men; at that moment a revival began, the end of which is not yet. So, when the gospel moves upon the Roman world in Paul, and upon the mediaeval world in Augustine; when the modern world began in Luther, and present-day evangelical theology had a new birth in Wesley, four strong men who desired nothing but God lived and loved and thought and wrought.

This is the one story left us in the record of prophet and preacher and poet and saint. Into the seers of old came the message of God which was as a fire shut up in their bones. They could but speak. It may have been an Amos, with words of righteousness; Hosea, with a message of love out of a broken heart; Isaiah, at court, rebuking kings and princes; Jeremiah, living the life of the Crucified before the days of the Crucified. Be that as it may, they were preachers with a message to the people of their own times, bringing a message from God out of the depths of their own soul's deepest and most sacred experiences. Through them God came close to the people. Better than cloudy pillars and bleeding beasts were these men unto whom the message came, and out of whom God burst in terrible indignation against sin.

This makes the preacher at all times. Men in touch with the living love, fresh from the council-chambers of the Most High, possessed of a message trembling with the pulsations of the eternal world, can speak home to the heart of the race.

> "But that which issues from the heart alone
> Will bend the heart of others to your own."

A message from God, wrought out in the alchemy of

the heart's experience, will do more to stop the dry-rot of unbelief, to puncture religious sham and pretense, to shame selfishness and to rebuke sin, than all the nostrums of social reformers and panaceas of humanitarian agitators. The men fresh from the forests and the fields, from the shops and the factories, with a living experience of God, won victories in the early days of Methodism. They believed that all men may be saved, and that when a man is saved he will know it. With this slogan they moved on, enthusiastically praying and preaching and singing aud shouting and feeding the poor and weeping over the lost until the Wesleyan movement swept around the world. These men pioneered the way, and they still live among us as those of whom the world was not worthy. Through these God broke upon the world anew, and evangelical theology had a new birth.

METHODIST HERITAGE OF THE CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

(An Address of M. T. Plyler, before the North Carolina Conference at Its Session in Goldsboro in 1945)

For two hundred years the followers of John Wesley have been saying that Methodism was born in a university. Reference, of course, is made to the Holy Club in Oxford University, which was founded by Charles Wesley in 1729 and of which later John Wesley became leader of the group. There remained certain characteristics of John's later life, notably study of the Bible, diligent use of time, social betterment and rigid results of conduct "according to the methods laid down in the Bible."

Others have claimed that Methodism began with the organization of the first society in London, 1739. Of this Wesley says: "At the latter end of 1739 about eight to ten persons came to me in London who appeared to be deeply convicted of sin. They desired that I would spend some time with them in prayer and advise them how to flee the wrath to come." He agreed to meet them on Thursday evening.

On this first Thursday about twelve people came; the next week a hundred. Thus this Methodist Society was the forerunner of organized Methodism, which as the Wesleyan movement, has spread around the world. Soon Methodist Societies were formed far and wide so that it became necessary to formulate a set of regulations for his followers. In 1743 Wesley formulated "The General Rules" of the Methodist Societies which remain an important part of Methodism to this present day. The next year Wesley called his helpers together for a conference. Ten preachers met with him in London. This was the first Annual Conference in Methodism—an institution that is now found wherever Methodism has gone. The conference is a vital part of the marvelous organization of the Methodist Church.

The real birthday of Methodism, however, came when the Oxford scholar and High Church minister of the Anglican Church realized that he who went to America to convert the Indians had not himself been converted to God. On Wesley's return to England from Georgia, Peter Bohler a Moravian missionary, told Wesley that his trouble lay in a lack of a true faith which is the free gift of God, and not to be secured by mechanically doing good works such as those he had been relying on. Wesley's struggle continued; weeks passed before relief came to him.

Paul N. Garber in "That Fighting Spirit of Methodism" puts it thus:

"On Wednesday, May 24, 1738, after a day of religious excitement, Wesley unwillingly went in the evening to a meeting of a religious society which met on Aldersgate Street. Wesley tells us that in this meeting a man was reading to the audience Martin Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, in which Luther explains what faith is and declares that a person is justified only through faith. It was while this preface was being read that a wonderful experience came into the life of Wesley. He writes:

" 'About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.' In that simple way Wesley explains how he met his Saviour in a vital manner. After a search of thirty-five years Wesley found true religion. To his soul came the assurance of divine pardon. He rushed from the meeting to tell the good news to his brother. Charles Wesley writes: 'Towards ten my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of friends, and declared, 'I believe.' "

There and then the birthday of Methodism had arrived. Wesley was a changed man. Saul of Tarsus, whom God got on his feet and sent far hence to the Gentile world; Martin Luther, whom God used to reform a corrupt Christianity, and John Wesley, who came into vital contact with God, and his Saviour became a loving companion—had similar experiences that sent them forth to transform the world. Wesley discovered that memorable night in Aldersgate Street that salvation is through Christ alone and not through and by his own good deeds. Dean Lynn Hough states it thus:

"At last there came a night of destiny at Aldersgate Street. It was a night when the ages met the age. Someone was reading aloud Martin Luther's exposition of Paul's experience of evangelical religion. And when Luther and Paul spoke that night to Wesley, something occurred which was of moment to all the world. He discovered the way of truth as distinct from the way of self-conscious action. He felt his 'heart strangely warmed,' and so there was released the energy which was to transform England. Christianity he saw was not what he did for God, it was what Christ did for him. Of course, Wesley understood that an inner experience which did not turn into outer action would

stultify itself. So his inner experience became a program of action which involved an organization. However, it was primarily a new vitality. It related itself to every issue of human life. But, first of all, it was a fountain of energy playing in a man's soul.

"Paul, Augustine, Luther and Wesley were very different in all the incidentals of life. The brilliant young first-century Jew, the passionate North African, with the heat of his land in his blood, the hearty and virile sixteenth-century German, the cautious mathematically minded Englishman—how utterly unlike they are! Yet each discovered the same secret, and each released influences which have profoundly modified the life of the whole world. The thing which a man cannot do for himself, God is ready to do for him. This was the truth which like a sudden sunrise illuminated their sky. They were made for God and their hearts were restless until they found rest in him. And they found rest, and with it a productive energy of the most practical and far-reaching character."

May 24, 1738, remains a sacred date for Methodists. On that day Methodism was born. Yet, more, as Leckey writes: "It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the scene which took place at the humble meeting in Aldersgate Street forms an epoch in English history." Soon Wesley was shut out of the Anglican churches; so then he took to the fields, saying: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." This marked a new day for religion in England, and also for religion in America, as John Wesley looked upon all the world as his parish.

The crowds pressed upon him. He preached to the thousands instead of to the hundreds as he went forth a flaming evangel for God. Some irresistible inner passion drove him on as he became a crusader for God and for human welfare.

For more than half a century Wesley pressed on across England again and again, up into Scotland and over Ireland. He made 22 visits to Scotland and 42 into Ireland. What a work did he among the Irish and through them, for America. From Ireland there came to America Robert Strawbridge, Philip Embury and Barbara Heck, who laid the foundation for American Methodism. This crusader for God preached in taverns, on the commons, by the wayside, at the coal pits, to the multitudes in the open fields as he hastened on to minister to the crowds that awaited his coming.

In his crusading zeal, Wesley attacked the vices and the injustices of his day. Drunkenness was one of the sins of the 18th-Century England. Wesley refused to be quiet in regard to this national sin. The slave trade was the source of large fortunes made by furnishing slaves to the Americas. At that time, there was no opposition to this villainy—not even from the Anglican Church. Wesley pronounced this the "sum of all villainies," as he cried out against slavery and the slave trade. Wesley lived in a time of war when England was making vast conquests in India and in America. He hated war with all the by-products of militarism because it is destructive of God's works and has no place in civilization.

Sabbath breaking, swearing, dueling and all other vices so common in his day were bitterly attacked by this daring crusader who was so sure of God and had such a passion for the welfare of humanity.

John Wesley was sure that God had given him a message for all men. With his sudden illumination of soul which crowned the long years of learning and the deep humiliation of failure as a missionary to Georgia, Wesley had an abiding sense of certainty that belongs to every religious revival. The abiding and dominant note in early Methodism is a living experience; the step to evangelism is instantaneous.

"What we have felt and seen with confidence, we tell."

Along with this certainty of Wesley's experience was his breadth. He rejoiced to form societies in which any man, Churchman or Quaker, might join. Wherever souls rejoiced in the witness of the spirit, meeting souls in need, the simple Methodist Societies sprang into life. A Methodist was bound to be an evangelist and a missionary. So evangelism and missions were of the very genius of Methodism.

Twelve months after Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed," he laid the cornerstone for the first Methodist educational institution in all the world. This was in the same year in which he organized that first society in London. The school was located at Kingswood and the first scholars were the children of the miners of that region. Wesley declared "The Methodists may be poor, but there is no need that they be ignorant." In America, Asbury followed the example set in England when he founded Cokesbury College at Abingdon in Maryland. Following these two early ventures, the Methodists have established schools and colleges in all lands. Wesley, from the beginning of his revival, insisted that wherever eight or ten persons can be assembled, there let a Sunday School be held.

The Methodists have won for God by making use of all classes and conditions of men. Not many of the noble were called. From field and factory and coalpit and counting-house, have come our preachers. These men knew little of the schools, but they were well versed in the school of Christ. Though gathered from many sources and trained in varied schools they have remained true to type. The Methodists look for God to have much to do with making a preacher—God as an abiding power and as a conscious presence.

It is said that a certain progressive philosopher, a theological professor, was explaining to an audience the conversion of St. Paul on the theory of a sunstroke. A Scotch-

man who had gotten through at a Methodist altar, and knew it, arose and asked the privilege of a suggestion. It was granted and this was the suggestion: "When you return, Professor, take your faculty and the students out in the sun and leave them there a good while. This old world needs nothing so much as Pauline sunstrokes, when you consider all that has come out of that wonderful experience."

Certainly the Methodists have never believed that preachers came from any such process. The fire in their bones and the flame on the altar of their hearts were not results of a sunstroke. Methodists have made much of the burning heart and of their altar-fires, but these never resulted from sunstrokes. "And there flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is purged." And when the voice of the Lord was heard saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for me," the Methodist preacher has shouted in glad surrender, "Here am I, send me." Methodism has had a vision of the Lord of hosts, and it fully counts on and expects its ministers to know God. That living experience known of old is the altar-fire that must never go out. For under the touch of God comes the potential grandeur of all men. This enables the Methodists to see the possibility of making prophets and saints of ordinary men and women. Shall we expect less of present day Methodism?

Thus we have to do with God in man and man in God; man being made aware of the God disclosed in Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and man. Not only is Jesus the go-between in man's relation to God, but he is also the head and front of the entire Christian system. So Methodism has evermore been concerned with the relation of God to the individual and also the relation of God to the group,

as made known in the God-man. Our gospel is therefore social as well as individual. The conscious personal relation of the individual, to God through Jesus Christ makes an effective social gospel after the pattern shown by the Man of Galilee. Hence the Methodists expect the divine afflatus in man to make effective the effort for a better world through the agency of Christ.

Well may the entire work of the Methodist Church be gathered under the three heads of Evangelism, Education and Missions.

The widespread disposition to separate life from religion is a most disconcerting tendency of the present. Our philosophy is that religion is the deepest and most potential thing in life. But our practice is to exalt the things of life rather than the deep and abiding impulses of the soul that spring from religion. Social security, material comforts and religion with an economic bolstering are the themes of many pulpits. It is an approach from the outside and reliance on the externals rather than on the dynamics of religion which work from within. We are too much taken with material betterment rather than with spiritual conquests.

Never in all the stirring years of the Wesleyan movement has evangelism been regarded a pink tea affair. From whatever walks of life they may come, the men able to lead in the present evangelical conquest of united Methodism certainly must have a personal knowledge of the Man who stood by Paul in the darkness of the storm with the assurance that not one soul on the ship should perish; they must be conscious of that Presence which enabled the shackled prisoners of Philippi to sing songs at midnight; and they must cherish fellowship with the heavenly intelligences whose conversations belong to the third heaven. The Shekinah will then glow on the altar of the heart and a new glory will crown the mercy seat as amid the sordid and selfish indulgences of city life and in the weary rounds of

the wide wastes of earth these messengers of heaven startle and arouse men. So when that divine something latent in the soul of man is touched, like the lark, he will "sing hymns at heaven's gate." For Methodism still believes that beneath all the litter and debris of life, beneath all incrustations of sin, misery and wretchedness lies the image of the divine—

> " 'Tis not in the high stars alone,
> Nor in the cups of budding flowers,
> Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
> Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
> But in the mud and scum of things
> There always, always something sings."

All those here below who passionately win men to Jesus have refused to be tied down to the dead level of earth as though this world was their home. In the churches and in the chapels, by wayside and in the fields, in the shop and in the kitchen, in the parlor, on foot and on horseback, Methodists sang of heaven—sang of the heavenly home so bright and so fair, each one "A pilgrim bound for the promised land."

The mystical element in religion—the sense of a present, active vital God as disclosed in the Bible, in the lives of the saints and also in the experiences of ordinary men and women—would do much to make more effective present-day Methodists in this hour when the sense of God has been dimmed and well nigh lost in the worship of things. With a fresh thrill of God in the soul of all classes and conditions of Methodism, we could with evangelistic fervor and passionate concern for the neglected masses of industrial centers and of unchurched populations proclaim with overwhelming conviction the familiar doctrine that all men are sinners; that all men may be saved; and that a man when he is saved he will know it. Such a message of conviction, flow-

ing from a Christian experience, will minister in a fine way to the eager longings of desolate souls in the city pews and in country meeting houses. Modern day Methodists, able to preach, to pray, to sing and to rejoice after this fashion, will comfort believers and rescue the perishing by turning lost men to One mighty to save. Then the weak will grow strong and the faint-hearted will take courage as the dynamic power of the gospel is made known in family groups, in church school, in youth crusades, in missionary societies, and in the various efforts for social betterment. Under such an inner urge the pulpits will flame and the pews in the spiritual wastes will testify anew, leading to a mighty turning to God. Methodist saints can then break forth into shouting the good news, Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Fully as personal and dynamic as evangelism is education. The educational process, long and slow and comprehensive, is primarily personal and requires much patience through the years. From the hour that a mother looks into the innocent depths of baby eyes and guides the first tottering footsteps of infant feet, the tedious process goes on. Through infancy, youth, adolescence and until "the mourners go about the streets," the demands of education are insistent. In the home, in the school, in the church, at the nuptial altar, and out across the wide world the children of men do continue in the process of learning through all the flight of years.

We who cherish the Christian view of the universe, in which the ideal and the spiritual have the chief place, hold that education belongs to the whole man, both body and soul. Consequently Christian education is accounted of first concern in the home, the school, the church and other rounds of life. What a field for shaping life and determining destiny! The many millions now under the care of parents, teachers and preachers are in the plastic and impressionable period of life. To give direction to their feet

and to fire their imaginations with visions of the coming kingdom is of immense import. These noble and devoted men and women shape and fashion the future of our church. They are most essential to our future; for Methodism dares not attempt to live on its history. Neither can it deal with the future as our fathers dealt with the eighteenth century. Truly our worldparish is far different from theirs. My fear for Methodism is lest we shall fail in our courage, and dare not fill the place to which God is calling us in this day. Marching forth from the background of our most triumphant history and dowered by Him who hath the stars under His feet, the one command is *Forward, March!*

Would that our Methodism in all our educational endeavor from grammar grades to university seniors could feel throbbing through its soul the sentiment of the great battle hymn of the ages:

> "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God;
> Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod."

Too few of our teachers, even in our church schools, are able to send boys and girls, young men and young women from their classes constrained to exclaim, as did the woman who met with Jesus by the well, "I met a man who told me all that ever I did." Teachers wanting in this stirring personal touch of the living Christ are largely failures, unable to command the generations coming after them. We have abundance of machinery well articulated and well oiled, but these devout souls remain most apprehensive lest we are wanting in the elements that make for spiritual conquests in our efforts in Christian education. Following the evangelistic conquests that characterized the first decades of the Wesleyan movement they are left anxious and perplexed, wondering what the end will be with the intricate and more varied elements of Methodism in an age so far removed from all former times.

Methodism has never been content to cherish complacently a passive, easy-going, religious devotion, wanting in the best efforts than man has to offer. We have always held to the conviction that God's plans for making the new heavens and the new earth require us to do our utmost to bring in the new and better day. So, both evangelism, and education must go hand in hand as we move to the conquest. From the cradle to the grave in all stages of his existence, man should be aware of God as a force divine in human life. Man and God are expected to work together for the better day.

"He is breaking down the walls, he is casting up the way;
He is calling for his angels to build up the gates of day;
But his angels here are human, not the shining hosts above;
For the drum-beats of his army are the heart-beats of our love."

So, the climax of the Methodist conquest belongs to the missionary enterprise which employs so largely both evangelism and education. "The world is the field" into which the kingdom comes and the church is the agency by which it comes. Our best book on missions is the New Testament. The Acts of the Apostles is Luke's account of the infant church and the Epistles of Paul are letters to the Christian groups in the Roman world scattered along the roads followed by Paul on his several missionary journeys. This great missionary with the Christian up-look was ever on the outward-bound to the regions beyond.

Jesus sent his disciples into all the world to preach, to teach and to heal as they went. In all the after centuries the fidelity with which his followers have lived up to this instruction has been the measure of vigor with which they have gone forth to the saving of the nations. In the ages of high spiritual endeavor and triumphant missionary conquests, the church has been best able to sing:

"Out of the shadows of night
The world rolls into light,
It is day-break everywhere."

"Get thee up into Nebo, and die," said God to Moses as he went to the heights of Pisgah to get a vision of Canaan. "Go over and possess the land," came the message from God to Joshua, Moses' successor, and "Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed; for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Such is the present day message to our Methodism.

THE EVENING OF A WONDERFUL DAY

(Report of the General Conference's vote that assured the union of American Methodism)

Not once in a hundred years comes there a day such as April 29, 1938, when the action of the General Conference in Birmingham, Alabama, made one American Methodism. This is the largest group of the followers of the Nazarene that ever united at any one time in any one land. What might eight million devoted followers of the Christ do for the saving of a distraught and disturbed world! Not all of these Methodists are even respectable and decent citizens much less men and women who are willing to let Jesus have a chance in their lives, but they are perhaps as good as the Christ has ever known in the larger groups of his followers.

What thrilling hours were those at the close of Unification Day in Birmingham! Dr. J. H. Straughn, fraternal messenger from the Methodist Protestant Church, and Bishop Edwin H. Hughes, messenger from the Methodist Episcopal Church, were in their most charming moods and they brought messages that will long be remembered and talked of to children and children's children.

Following the vote of the afternoon that vast crowd assembled in the evening with a vivid sense of victory and coming conquest. All thoughtful followers of Wesley were mindful of the two centuries gone and they rejoiced to face the future with a new sense of fellowship and brother-

hood. We were all Methodists together with many eager to do something more than ever before in spreading scriptural holiness over these lands and beyond the seas. It seemed that J. H. Straughn and Edwin Holt Hughes were messengers sent from God to cheer us on at the close of this epochal day. We dreamed dreams and saw visions of the coming decades as united Methodism moves to the conquest. How that congregation did sing! And all around through the crowd as these men of God talked were those who almost unconsciously reached for their handkerchiefs to brush away the tears of joy. Every one felt that this was indeed the climax of an almost perfect day in Methodist annals.

For this Methodist preacher, who for thirty years since Thomas Hamilton Lewis, the Methodist Protestant prophet of Methodist union, stirred new visions in his soul, it was indeed a rare privilege to watch from the press gallery the achievements of this glorious day. Better still, is it to have had some little part for the past fifteen years in making possible the favorable conditions for real Methodist union in North Carolina. Perhaps we Methodists are better favored in this respect than the people of any other state. Surely we will give our youth and every forward looking person among us a chance to count for more than ever before. The challenge that went out from Birmingham on April 29, is a call to the world. This is indeed our Aldersgate for real conquest. M. T. P.

IMPORTANT BOOKS BY OUR OWN MEN

President W. P. Few rarely wrote words of commendation of men or books—the more surprising are the following words:

I have had in mind for several months to call the attention of readers of the Advocate to some important books

written by our own men; but until now I have been prevented by close preoccupation with other urgent duties.

The editor of the Advocate, in his "Rev. John Tillett, the Iron Duke of the Methodist Itinerancy," has written a fascinating book. It was men like John Tillett who planted Methodism in North Carolina and all over America. We of this generation need to know more about those heroic makers of our civilization. Mr. Plyler has done us a distinct service in preserving this man's record and making it available for us in a volume that holds one's attention from the first page to the last.

Dean Wilbur F. Tillett's "The Paths That Lead to God" is well described by its title. Dean Tillett, a son of the Iron Duke of the Methodist Itinerancy, was born and bred among us, and received a good part of his education in the state. At Trinity College, where he spent two years, he was a classmate of Joseph G. Brown and Walter H. Page. Neither of the three stayed to graduate but all lived to become important and highly useful men.

A book like Dr. Tillett's always in order, coming just now has a sort of timeliness. It is nowhere contentious about outworn forms, but it is conservative of the essential things in our Christianity. I can heartily commend it to all readers but especially to any who are disturbed by the confused talk one hears nowadays about science and religion. The reading of it will do good and only good.

The two books that remain to be mentioned are by the other Plyler—par nobile fratrum. I can commend "Bethel Among the Oaks" by Rev. M. T. Plyler for two especial reasons: (1) it will tend to strengthen the reader's interest in the country church, and (2) to explode the false notion that genuine religion can only be found in old-fashioned surroundings.

The same author's "Thomas Neal Ivey, Golden-hearted Gentleman," has recently been reviewed in the Advocate.

Let me add that it is an admirable treatment of an admirable career; and let me urge the reading of it by all our people. I read it with growing interest as I read Mr. Plyler's excellent study of Dr. Ivey's father.

It has been often pointed out, and lately emphasized, that North Carolinians are not a reading people. I could wish that this charge against a people who are doing well in so many ways might prove to be false at least so far as these four books are concerned. They are worthy of a wide reading.

BUSY FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY

Mrs. M. T. Plyler during her long years as the devoted wife of an itinerant Methodist preacher, along with the many cares incident to the demands of a big family, not to mention the numerous calls upon the wife of a pastor, found time to give special attention to the cause of the Woman's Missionary Society. For more than fifteen years she edited the Woman's page of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate,* telling of the work of the women in the North Carolina Conference. She also wrote sketches of "Three Notable Women of North Carolina Methodism." These narratives appeared in *Historical Papers* of the North Carolina Conference Historical Society in 1925. They told of Ellen Morphus Wood, Frances M. Bumpas, and Mary Fleming Black—three of the notable leaders in their day.

This busy mother with the care of seven children and the calls that came from the families of the parish, to the surprise of many, found time to attend the missionary societies and lead in other church organizations. Added to all this were her contributions to the church paper from week to week for more than two decades.

Two of her articles—one for the springtime and another for Mothers Day, which were furnished the *Christian Advocate,* have a place in the following pages:

THE MOTHERS OF MEN

However the destinies of men go, there come seasons when men's minds delight to linger about the woman who first brought to them love and tenderness.

Today, whether men are on the home front carrying on the affairs of a working world, or on the sea, or in the air flying to drop devastating bombs, or moving with the compelling force of tanks and guns along the battlefront, memory claims attention and traces back to other days when mother was near. Memory goes back to first consciousness and she was there; during the uncertain hours of childhood when new things were tried, she was there with a guiding hand.

To you, men and women of the everywhere, pause to give tribute to her, who first looked upon your tiny form with adoring eyes. Before the world was aware of your existence, her hands bathed your body and gently patted your smooth pink flesh; her hands fashioned the pretty garments to adorn your body; it was she who made the birthday cake and decorated it with pink candles; when storms came and lightnings flashed and sudden thunderbolts sent fear and terror, her calmness made you strong and she taught you that this is our Father's world, that a Father's hand is ruling the universe.

She showed you the glittering stars, the bluebird on the wing, the cardinals building their nest in the rose-covered arbor that helped to make your home and hers beautiful; she taught you the note of the mocking bird and that of the wood thrush in the deep woods; she opened the Bible to you and brought rich thoughts of men to your understanding. The first music that you heard was the lullaby from her lips that led on unto a wider realm of musical harmonies.

The world of imagination she made real to you through pictures and story books that told of Humpty-Dumpty, Little Miss Muffet, The Three Bears, and all the animal "creeturs" of Uncle Remus.

After that, you went out into the world on your own, for you felt your strength but sometimes you won and

sometimes you lost, but she was always with you; oftentimes, you met deceit and disloyalty but she was always true; now and then you failed, but she always believed in you; the light of her countenance gave you courage and a new power to go forward.

And now, in May, whether you wear the white rose or the red rose in her memory, she is still with you, trusting you to build a better world where men and women and little children may live together in peace and joy to perpetuate "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." E. S. P.

THE PLEDGE OF SPRINGTIME

The red bird flits across the landscape to the delight of the onlookers; the bluebird sits perched on the limb of a tree whose bareness displays both the blueness of the bird and the beauty of form and symmetry belonging to the tree; the twittering of the mocking bird tells that mating time has come and there are materials handy for making the snug home for the nestlings; the crocus has pushed up through the brown sod and spread patches of gold here and there.

A mighty force is surging in nature to keep her pledge of springtime and seed time. Silently nature moves onward bringing bud and blossom and fruit. No matter if man is bent to kill and destroy, no matter if man mars and scars the beauty of earth, there is a power that heals and restores, a rejuvenating power that brings laughter and joy that holds our humanity to the finer things of life—the true and the beautiful.

The nations have set themselves in line of battle, from every point of the compass they march; they march around with the cruelest weapons that intelligence and skill can contrive; they fight with vicious strength to hold a nation's

soil, a nation's customs, a nation's ideals and a nation's resources, each nation seeking her own gain, although certain nations are confederated.

But education and scientific advancement have made the people of the world acquainted, and men, and women and children have as household words the names of those from all nations who have spent themselves lavishly to make a contribution to humanity regardless of nationality.

In these latter days people are refreshing their memories concerning national policies and government enactments. Through the freedom of the press and freedom of speech, the majority have an unusual opportunity to throw aside prejudice and injustice and become a deciding factor in a new world that extends the four freedoms beyond the confines of one nation unto the boundaries of many nations that all may learn the good neighbor policy.

Even a world war may bring men into contacts that result in a deeper respect and admiration of one group for other groups.

Despite the atrocities of the battle front, men are growing more tolerant, and more interested in the achievements of those on the outside of a prescribed group.

More and more frequently are men and women of different races, and cultures and creeds brought together on the same platform and given an opportunity for an expression of their opinions.

With an ever increasing momentum individuals and societies are concerned beyond one's own, even unto the outer rim of the universe that every one of every nation may receive the good things of earth and be included in the wide bond of world brotherhood.

These forces for world brotherhood are moving from many directions and are as persistent as those that bring springtime and seed time and autumn and harvest.

E. S. P.

MOTHER, HOME AND HEAVEN

Heaven as the home of the soul and mother as the heart of the home have made these three words the most cherished of the language. In recent decades in the songs and in the sermons of the American church, this trio of words seem to have faded away. Do these familiar terms no longer make appeal to the average man?

With the mother, life, love, faith, hope are fundamental. Since "love will dream and faith will trust," a mother's entire being is shot through with life lived under the dominance of sacrificial love. Such women never count the cost. The mother-soul holds: "That life is ever Lord of Death and Love can never lose its own." Tennyson's finest tribute to motherlove is in his Rizpah where he tells of the old mother whose wild boy had been hanged for robbing the mail. This old woman who had been with God in the dark, could hear the voice of her Willie in the wailing of the wind over land and sea, calling, "Mother, O mother, come out to me." Such is a mother's love. This warmest love that can never grow cold cherishes the secret hope that outlives all else.

Home, the resort of love, of joy, of peace, of family fellowship, is the place about which gather the pathos and tenderest longings of life. How dear to the American heart have been the cabins in the woods and the lowly huts by the wayside, so much akin to the simple cottages and the stately homes of old England. Though ever so humble, there have remained home, sweet home. The charm of the good old Saxon word home has come down from those who have known and loved the firesides about which mothers gathered their children. Even though the light burned low on the hearthstone, the altar of loving hearts continued to glow. Brighter than electric lights in crowded apartments or on the boulevards of the rich were these in which the sacrifices of mother-love were known.

We would that lyric poets, prophets in the sanctuary, and the song writers of this day might exalt anew the good old word so cherished by generations gone who held that mother makes home. And they also insisted that home was the sweetest thought of heaven, as they sang, "My heavenly home is bright and fair."

The longing for the far away home of the soul has seemingly dropped out of the desires of this generation. The comforts of a complacent people leave few longings for that land that is fairer than day—for "a land of pure delight where saints immortal reign." True, ear hath not heard the song, eye hath not seen the glories, and no mortal man hath dreamed the joys that lie beyond life's toils and cares, still in our better hours we hope that somehow, somewhere we shall meet again.

An effective advance of this day would be to exalt the essentials, such as mother and home and heaven. So much has "gone with the wind" that the dearest and best and sweetest are fading away.

GRIDIRON BATTLE WITH UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

(October 4, 1930, Recalls the "Old Days")

Trinity College met the University of Virginia for the first time in a football game in Richmond, 1890, forty years ago. This game was played in Island Park on a dull November afternoon, the dust fully four inches deep on this island of James River. The last game between the same University and Duke University was played in the beautiful stadium at Durham on a green sod under a glorious October sky.

No band and enthusiastic student body lent color to, and aroused enthusiasm, on this first occasion. Richmond knew little of football; then colleges were not agog and crowds did not follow the teams. This game, however, had the dis-

tinction of being the first interstate contest ever played in the South.

The contest was desperate. Players filled with grim determination waged the fight to a finish. The game started with the celebrated "flying-wedge" and continued until set of sun with little open play. The scrimmages followed each other in close succession. End runs and punts down the field were the most spectacular plays made. Now and then a drop kick from the field was tried. The forward pass was then unknown.

It required brawn and some brain to keep up effective play through those forty-five minute halves of rushing lines and clashing backs. Virginia won. The Trinity team reminded one of the Light Brigade after the charge at Balaklava. The eleven returned; but it was with bruises on the right of them and bruises on the left of them and bruises on the front of them. Some of the players had to be pulled out of their "bunks" on the return trip next morning as we neared Greensboro.

The next year, 1891, Trinity met Virginia on the same field, a wiser, a better trained and a stronger eleven, equally as determined as were the Duke boys in the stadium at Durham thirty-nine years after. As the sun went down that far-off autumn day the score stood—to the utter astonishment of many on the James—20 to 0 in favor of Trinity.

Garth, Virginia's center, weighed 240 pounds and Whitaker, Trinity's pivot man, 225, with the rest of the team shading off all the way down to 165. There were giants in those days. Daniels, Durham, R. L., Durham, S. J. and Harper, backs; Durham (Plato), Hanes, Avery, McDowell, Plyler, M. T., Caviness and Whitaker were the first string line men, grimly set for the "flying-wedge" and all else that might follow. Most of these men have passed on with the great majority; others still remain in the game of life.

This last year Plato Durham passed on. How we did wish that he could have been present to have witnessed this latest meeting of Virginia and Duke! Through all the long weary years in private and on the public platform, as occasion offered, did this orator and scholar, as well as athlete, recount those glorious days of old on the gridiron. Somehow this strong man, with the soul of a mystic, felt that something of the spirit of Trinity in the '90's would evermore animate his Alma Mater.

The Virginia and Trinity teams met again in 1892 and 1893, and then later in 1923. This good year fortunately sees the revival of the old athletic contests. Let us hope these may be continued through the years. Naturally, the men who first met this University of the Old Dominion on the gridiron in the long ago are greatly pleased with the victories won by the collegians of this later generation. As Duke crossed Virginia's line at Durham for the first touchdown that afternoon one man up near the press-box exclaimed, "I have waited thirty-nine years for this!"

Football in the Nineties enjoyed the romance that ever gathers about beginnings. The stories of Roanoke Island in North Carolina, of Jamestown Island in Virginia and of Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts make unusual appeal because they have to do with the early settlements of the English race on this continent. These early and heroic efforts belong to the pioneer days. The same holds true of today's great college game—football. Four decades ago, Yale, Princeton and Harvard were the "big three" of the East. A Yale man, Dr. J. F. Crowell, the young president of Trinity College, brought the game South. Trinity, Carolina and Wake Forest were the football pioneers in North Carolina. In those days the coaching, the crowds, the popular interest, and the big gate receipts of this day were unknown. A college counted itself lucky to have one coach, much less a staff of coaches. Then, no one ever dreamed of

a stadium in Dixie such as that in which Virginia and Duke met in 1930. In that day, instead of a beautiful field, well set with grass, we played on a gridiron of gravel or dust or mud. Most of the spectators spent the time running up and down the sidelines, with an occasional stampede across the field when the contest became fierce and furious. The "rooters" felt free to do that which was right in their own eyes, even of taking part in the "scraps" on the field as the unrestricted pioneer impulses of that day ran rampant.

Instead of the clicking of typewriters and telegraph instruments as the sports writers dash off the story of the game and telegraph operators send the records of play across the land, then local newspaper men gathered the story of the afternoon from spectators and players in the hotel lobbies. Then the morning papers would carry a brief account of the game with some mention of any unusual occurrence. No semblance of a present day report appeared.

But this was before the automobile, the movie and the radio, with all that goes with these in the way of publicity in this present world of action.

It was worth a trip across the state to see Duke's backs rip through the Cavalier line. Many old grads will regret the fate that kept them from the sights of this eventful day —a victory after thirty-nine long years. More than nine college generations is too long a time for such—the heart grows sick. Let us hope that the Blue Devils may wade into the Cavaliers for touchdowns many and victories not a few before another forty years have passed.

PHI BETA KAPPA CHAPTER INSTALLED AT TRINITY COLLEGE

The Phi Beta Kappa plans came to maturity March 29, 1920. Professor Paul Shorey, Senator of the United Chapters, presided.

M. T. Plyler, an alumnus member-elect of the class of '92, offered the following invocation:

"We would be still before Thee that Thou mayest speak to us—Thou in whom we live and move and have our being. Grant us thy favor this hour. Quicken our minds, move our hearts and make responsive our wills to the divine will.

"Let this hour be memorable for all. As we have met together to consider the high things of life and to come in closer fellowship one with another, we would be conscious of thy presence to guide us.

"Let heaven's blessings be upon all who have returned to *Alma Mater* on this most auspicious occasion, and bless especially him who brings the message of the evening.

"This, and every needed blessing, we most humbly ask in the name of our Lord and Saviour—Amen."

The Constitution of the Chapter was adopted and the following officers were elected: President—W. H. Glasson; Vice-President—William K. Boyd; Secretary-Treasurer—Charles W. Peppler.

Then the formal reception of the foundation members took place.

Membership is of three kinds: honorary, alumnus and student. Governor Thomas W. Bickett and Joseph G. Brown were the two honorary members, both of Raleigh.

Thirty-seven members were selected from the Alumni. These were taken from the classes of 1879 to 1909. No member may be elected until ten years after graduation. This condition is based upon one having won distinction in letters, science or education since his graduation.

Fourteen of the undergraduate members were selected from the present senior class.

Following the banquet and the address by Dr. Paul Shorey given in the Craven Memorial Hall, a reception was tendered at the home of President and Mrs. W. P. Few to the members and the visitors including their wives.

HONORARY DEGREES CONFERRED

At the graduating exercises of Duke University 1937, honorary degrees were bestowed upon three North Carolinians and a distinguished Louisiana physician and scientist. They were Marion Timothy Plyler, Durham, and Alva Washington Plyler, Greensboro, twin brothers and editors of the *North Carolina Christian Advocate;* Judge Robert Watson Winston, Chapel Hill, lawyer and author; and Dr. Charles Cassedy Bass, dean of the Medical School at Tulane University.

The citations read by President W. P. Few are as follows:

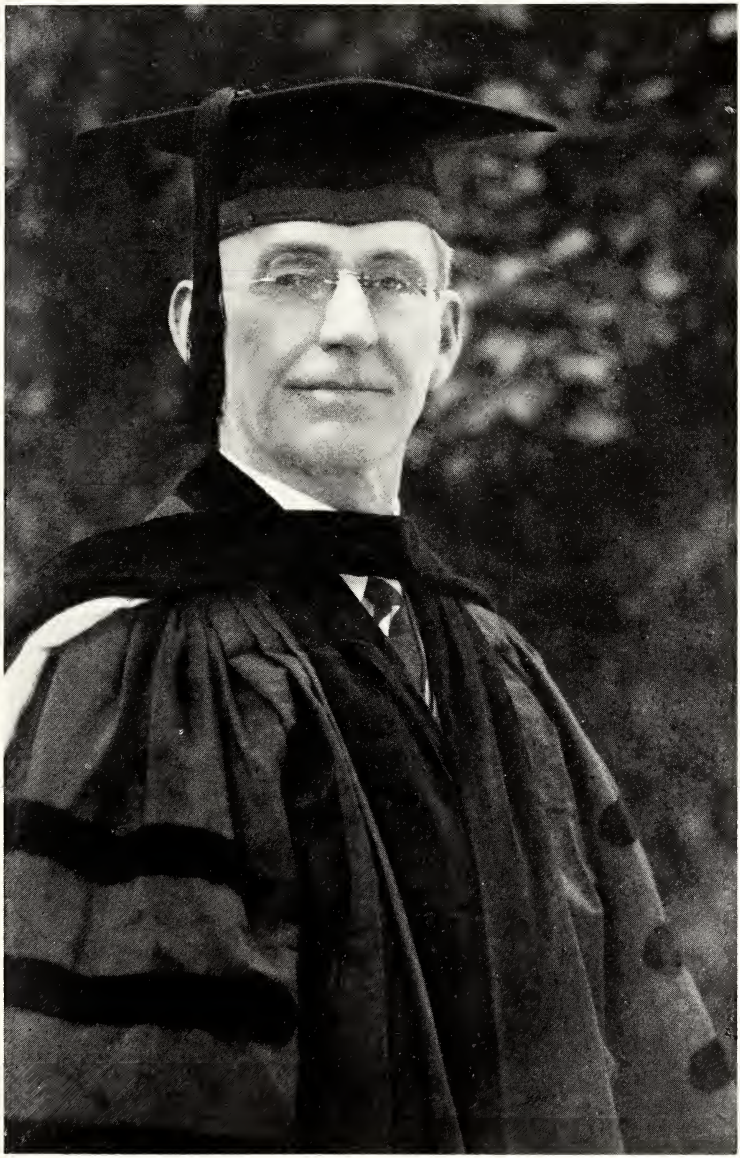
"Doctor of Divinity: Alva Washington and Marion Timothy Plyler, born on the same day; entered college at the same time, attended the same classes and graduated at the same commencement; set apart to the ministry on the same day and preached their first sermon on the same day; both authors of books and in one case joint authors; joint editors of an influential journal of opinion; leaders together in moral and religious causes—a noble pair of brothers."

"Doctor of Laws: Robert Watson Winston of North Carolina, lawyer and man of letters who has lived through and lived to interpret in their many implications the historic fall and inspiring rise of his native state."

"Doctor of Laws: Charles Cassedy Bass, professor of experimental medicine, director of the laboratories of clinical medicine, and dean of the school of medicine in Tulane University; honored here as everywhere for his achievements in medical research; distinguished scientist and servant of humanity."

Degree from Carolina

Six years before this recognition by Duke University, the University of North Carolina in 1931 had conferred a degree upon this member of the North Carolina Conference.



MARION TIMOTHY PLYLER

ON THE DAY GRANTED AN HONORARY DEGREE BY
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

The citation for Doctor of Divinity by the University of North Carolina was read by Dr. Archibald Henderson, chairman of the committee on public occasions. This follows:

Marion Timothy Plyler

"Native of North Carolina; graduate of Trinity College; and Master of Arts of both Trinity College and the University of North Carolina. Eloquent and influential preacher and writer, and competent editor, in particular of the *North Carolina Advocate.* Constructive in purpose, warm and generous in outlook, he has exercised large influence in the Methodist Church in North Carolina, for twenty years being the acknowledged leader of the North Carolina Conference. Thrice delegate to the General Conference, and official representative at the Ecumenical Conference in London in 1921. Chairman of the special commission for the erection of the Methodist Church here, massive in size, of vital Christian influence here and throughout the state."

CHAPLAIN GENERAL OF SONS OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION

(The Bulletin of the National Society, June 3, 1942, carried this biographical sketch)

Marion Timothy Plyler, son of Robert Conrad Plyler and Mary Kimball Plyler, was born in Iredell County, N. C., September 14, 1867. Both his paternal and maternal ancestors were among the early settlers of North Carolina and Virginia, Captain Buckner Kimball of North Carolina being one of his Revolutionary ancestors. These pioneers came out of Virginia more than fifty years prior to the Revolution.

M. T. Plyler was educated in the schools and colleges of his native state. He holds A.B., M.A., and D.D. degrees from Duke University, his Alma Mater; he also has an A.M. and D.D. from the University of North Carolina, with

which he has been closely associated in the class room and the church life at the University of North Carolina for more than two decades. He has also done special work in Sociology and Divinity in the University of Chicago. As a member of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Church he has been pastor of Methodist churches in the state nineteen years; thirteen years presiding elder of districts; and since 1927 editor of the North Carolina Christian Advocate. He has been a member of eight General Conferences and of two Ecumenical Methodist Conferences, one in London and the other in Atlanta. He was also a member of the Uniting Conference of American Methodism held in Kansas City in 1939. "Leroy Lee Smith, A Lawyer of the Old School"; "Bethel Among The Oaks"; "Thomas Neal Ivey, Golden Hearted Gentlemen"; and letters of travel from Europe and contributions to magazines are some of the products of his pen. Membership in Phi Beta Kappa, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Chaplain of the North Carolina Society of the Sons of the American Revolution are among his achievements.

This Tar Heel finds recreation in football games and genealogical research in the midst of his busy editorial life. But the real inspiration of his life came with the marriage of Epie Duncan Smith, daughter of Honorable L. L. Smith in 1900, and in the life of his four girls and three boys educated at Greensboro College, State College, and Duke University.

CELEBRATION OF GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The children and grandchildren one and all assembled at the Plyler home on Gregson Street for the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage on Tuesday, June 20, 1950. The seven children and the eight grandchildren were all present for that glad occasion.

Eleanor Kimball, with her husband, Wasson Baird, was the first to arrive from New York; Mern, Mrs. J. R.

MR. AND MRS. PLYLER AND THEIR SEVEN CHILDREN

Standing: Marion T., Jr., Grace, Mern, Eleanor Kimball and Conrad N. Plyler. Seated with parents are Epie Duncan and Leroy Smith Plyler.

Anthony, Jr., of Jacksonville, Florida, with her two children, Nancy and Sarah, reached Durham by plane the afternoon of Monday, June 19th; Conrad Plyler and Mary Katherine, with their two boys, Conrad, Jr., and Robert Hardy, arrived Monday night, from Norfolk, Virginia. Marion and his wife, Alma with their two children, M. T. III and Martha, of Whaleyville, Virginia came early Tuesday morning, as did Leroy of Gatesville, North Carolina. Grace, Mrs. J. A. McLean, and Epie, Mrs. Willis Van Wagoner and her two children, Anne and Susan, live in Durham, so this completed the roll of seven children and eight grandchildren, all being in perfect health and able to add good cheer to the occasion.

An interesting reminder of the Wedding Occasion half a century ago at the L. L. Smith home in Gatesville, North Carolina, was the presence of the old family servant known through the generations as "Mint," although her full name is Araminta Ballad. She could name all the various foods that were served for the guests entertained for the wedding as well as that served at the wedding supper. She also recalled the names of the guests present for the occasion. This was truly a great occasion, for "Mint" made possible by Dr. M. T. Plyler, Jr. giving her a place in his car. Of real interest to this Plyler family is the following family record:

Children and Grandchildren of
Marion Timothy Plyler and Epie S. Plyler

1. *Leroy Smith* of Gatesville, at the old Smith home.
2. *Epie Duncan* of Durham, who married Willis Van Wagoner, of Niagara Falls. Their children are Anne Dudley and Susan Norfleet.
3. *Dr. Marion Timothy, Jr.,* of Whaleyville, Virginia, who married Alma Blanchard of Gatesville, North Carolina. Their children are Marion Timothy III, and Martha Blanchard.

4. *Conrad Norfleet* of Norfolk, Virginia, who married Mary Katherine Dodson. Their children are Conrad Norfleet, Jr., and Robert Hardy.
5. *Mern* of Jacksonville, Florida, who married James R. Anthony, of Jacksonville, Florida. Their children are Nancy Norfleet and Sarah Seward.
6. *Grace* of Durham, who married J. A. McLean of Durham. They reside in Durham.
7. *Eleanor Kimball* of New York, who married Wasson Baird of Des Moines, Iowa.

All of the children attended Duke University except Conrad who studied at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore. Epie and Eleanor also attended Greensboro College, Greensboro, their mother's old college. Marion T. had the good fortune to be the first student to matriculate in the new Medical School of Duke University which opened October, 1930. He was able to spend a summer's quarter at Cambridge University, England, and also to get a glimpse of the hospital work in London.

THE NINE GRANDCHILDREN OF MR. AND MRS. M. T. PLYLER

Left to right: Nancy Norfleet Anthony, M. T. Plyler III, holding infant Robert Hardy Plyler, Sarah Seward Anthony, Martha Blanchard Plyler, Anne Dudley Van Wagoner, Susan Norfleet Van Wagoner, Conrad Norfleet Plyler, Jr. The baby in inset is Nancy Kimball Baird.

OUR MEMORIES GATHER ABOUT THIS FAVORED LAND OF THE SCUPPERNONG

Do you know the scuppernong? Have you gone out in the early hours, when the dew was on the vine and the freshness of the September morning filled the lungs, to gather this luscious grape? You never get away from the delicious odor and that indescribable flavor. Concentrated here is one of the elements contributing to the romance of Eastern Carolina. The frosts and cold of winter as well as the dews and heat of summer under the friendly sky go into the making of the scuppernong. Indigenous to the land of the magnolia and the mocking bird; to the land of gentle breezes and the soft summer's sun, this luscious fruit remains one of the cherished prizes of the autumn time.

Would that some poet might arise to tell in proper measures the charms of the brown scuppernong in the days of autumnal glory! The romantic past of a loyal and heroic people would gain a new significance from the days in which a pioneer people tasted first the nectar of the ancient vine of the wilderness to these last approaching October days so redolent with the memory of the years.

The hill country can boast of winesap and pippin, but only the wide stretches of the flat lands know the scuppernong with all its pristine qualities and historic associations. The "Hill-billie" who knows not the flavor of the pride of the east has yet something to live for and look to. It would be well worth the trip to take a spin over one of North Carolina's ribbons of concrete and become a part of it all.

APPENDIX I

THE SMITH GENEALOGICAL LINE OF EPIE SMITH PLYLER

Seated along the shores of the Blackwater River in Essex, England, near the Wisemans of Rivenhall, who first settled Isle of Wight County, Virginia, and related to them, was the Smith family of Blackmore and the Jennings family of Dunmow. It seems that several members of these two families later settled in Virginia. Among these was Col. Arthur Smith, Burgess of Isle of Wight and his brother-in-law Thomas Jennings.

The first of the Smiths at Blackmore was John Smith, second son of Thomas Smith of Rivenhall. John Smith was one of the auditors of King Henry VIII and that monarch granted him the manor and site of the Priory of Blackmore in 1540. He married Dorothy, daughter of Trymell of Worcester who was also a King's auditor.

John Smith did not live long to enjoy his lands at Blackmore for he made his will 1544 and died soon thereafter. His will is a remarkable document and is shown fully in the Essex Archaelogical Society Transactions (Vol. III, p. 56) as a specimen of his times. He bequeathed his eldest son Thomas "all my harness, weapons and artillery that is in my armory or gallery at Smythe's Hall, Blackmore.

Thomas succeeded him. According to Morat (Vol. II, p. 57) the monument of Thomas Smythe (1594) and his wife Margaret is in the South aisle of the east end of the Parish Church of St. Laurance at Blackmore. It is an altar tomb of modern brick and cement with two enriched alabaster pilasters and upon it reposes recumbent effigies of a man in armor and a woman in ruff and close dress, all of alabaster repaired with plaster. In the bell chamber are numerous fragments of the tomb including parts of the kneeling figures of four sons and two daughters. (Royal Commissions on Historical Monuments, Essex, Central and S. W. p. 17.)

John the oldest son of Thomas and his second wife died without issue, May 31, 1621. Charles inherited next, but by his wife Dorothy, daughter of Wiseman of Rivenhall; he had an only daughter, another Dorothy. Having no male heirs, Arthur, his next brother, succeeded him in the manor of Blackmore (Morant).

Arthur Smith, the next brother, married Anne Milward; he died, the 7th of March 1622-23 soon after his succession. His children were as follows: I, Captain Steven Smith; II, Thomas Smith, the second son; III, Arthur Smith, the third son; IV, Dorothy Smith, only daughter.

Arthur Smith, the third son of Arthur Smith of Blackmore was born in 1597. This would make his age about right for him to be the first Arthur Smith of Isle of Wight. This Arthur has been represented as the son of Sir Thomas Smith, the celebrated treasurer of the London Company (Virginia Historical Society Collections, Vol. XI, p. 149). But Sir Thomas Smith's will is shown in the Va. Mag. Vol. 26, pp. 267-69.

A long pedigree of the Smiths of Rivenhall is shown in the visitations of Essex I Essex Arch. Society of Transactions, Vol. III O. S. page 5.

Arthur Smith I came to Virginia in the year 1622. On September 10, 1637, he received from Sir John Harvey a patent for 1645 acres of land for the transportation of twenty-nine persons into the colony. He located this land at Smithfield, Isle of Wight County, Virginia. The patent was renewed by Sir William Berkley, March 21st, 1643, and fifty acres of land was added to it. Arthur Smith was Burgess from Isle of Wight County 1644-45. By his will dated October 1st, 1645, he left a tract of land of 2,275 acres to his children, viz: Thomas Smith, Arthur II, Richard Smith, George Smith, Jane Smith.

Since Thomas, Richard, George and Jane died without issue, therefore Arthur II came into full possession of his father's estate (Hennings Vol. VI, page 309).

Arthur Smith II was Justice of Isle of Wight County, Va. 1673-1680. In the latter year, he was Colonel of Militia, and in 1685 was a member of the House of Burgess. By his will dated Dec. 2nd, 1696, he left his estate to his sons, with provisions for reversion to his daughters if his sons should die without lawful male issues of their bodies.

Children: George Smith, died without issue; Thomas Smith, died without issue; Arthur Smitth III; Jane Smith; Sarah Smith; Mary Smith.

Arthur III. The only record given of Arthur Smith III is in his father's will. He probably died before his father, as it is recorded that his son Arthur Smith IV inherited the estate from his grandfather, Arthur Smith II. See Hennings Vol. VI, page 309.

Arthur Smith IV was justice of Isle of Wight County in 1702-14

and perhaps later. Arthur Smith IV married a Miss Lewis. He left his estate to his eldest son Thomas. (See Virginia Magazine, Vol. III, page 159.)

Children—Thomas Smith, Arthur Smith V, Probably others.

Arthur Smith V. Gentleman. His will book 4—page 424, dated August 31, 1741. Wife Mary—son Arthur, my seal ring—son Thomas all that tract of land which my father gave to my brother Thomas whereon John Summerell and William Wainright now live, also all my land at Blackwater, it being a part of the tract sold Robert and Henry Edwards. Daughter Mary to be maintained by my two sons at their discretion so long as she remains in the condition she is now in. Daughters Jane Ridley, Olive Hodsden and Martha Day. Grandson, Joseph Bridger to Sarah Stringer. Wife, Mary Bromfield. Witnesses, John Sommerell, John Smith, George Williams.

Children: Arthur Smith VI, Thomas Smith, Mary Smith, Jane Smith, Olive Smith, Martha Smith.

Arthur VI. The son of Arthur V was mentioned in his father's will as receiving his seal ring but the property went to his brother Thomas who died without issue.

Arthur Smith VII. Grandson of Arthur Smith V and his wife Mary Bromfield Smith was probably born around 1740. He inherited or was granted 360 acres of land in Nansemond County south of and adjoining the little village of Somerton where he established his home, reared his family and died there. He married Anne ..... The first census of the United States show they had nine children, however, we have a record of only three, viz:

Children: Richard R. Smith born 1771; Sarah Smith born 1773 —married Henry Copeland, 1792; Arthur Smith born 1779.

Richard Smith, son of Arthur VII and wife Anne ..... Smith was born near Somerton, Virginia, November 6, 1771; he married Mary Cross, daughter of Col. Hardy Cross in 1796. Mary Cross was born in Gates County, N. C. in March 1775. They had six children born to them: Ann Smith (Nancy) born Nov. 16, 1797; Edwin Smith, born July 6, 1799; Sarah Smith, born March 4, 1801, married Justin Rawls; Jethro Smith born Jan. 22, 1803, died in young manhood; Allen Smith born September 13, 1804, married Susan Copeland; Martha Smith (Patsie) born Feb. 24, 1810.

Sarah Smith, daughter of Arthur Smith VII and wife Anne ..... Smith, was born near Somerton, Virginia in 1773, died June 2, 1817. Sarah Smith married Henry Copeland, Nov. 29, 1792, issue twelve children. The Copeland items came from a Bible owned by Mrs. Sarah S. Copeland Riddick.

Susan, the daughter of Sarah Smith and Henry Copeland, married Allen Smith, the grand-parents of Epie Smith Plyler.

Arthur Smith, VIII son of Arthur Smith VII and wife Anne ..... Smith was born near Somerton, Va. in 1779. He married Susan Richardson in 1803. Arthur Smith was the first postmaster of Suffolk, Virginia and served in that capacity from 1804 to 1844 in connection with his other business. Arthur Smith and Susan Richardson Smith had eight children born to them: Arthur Richardson Smith born Nov. 1805, died 1865; Albert Smith born Feb. 1807, died 1807; Almira Smith born Sept. 1808, died 1846; Alexander Smith born Oct. 1810, died 1814; Mary Eliza Smith born March 1813, died 1815; Delia Ann Smith born Jan. 1815, died 1815; Martha Jane Louisa Smith born Dec. 1816, died 1888; Theodora Smith born Oct. 1823, died 1823.

Arthur Richardson Smith, son of Arthur Smith VIII and wife Susan Richardson Smith was born in Suffolk, Virginia November 1805, died in Cantonsville, Baltimore County, Maryland September 16, 1866. He grew to manhood in Suffolk, obtaining his early education in private schools and preparing for college under private tutors. He entered the medical department of the University of Virginia, which institution conferred upon him the degree of M.D. He began the practice of medicine at Deep Creek, a village of Norfolk County, Virginia. During the epidemic of yellow fever in Portsmouth in 1856 he volunteered to battle with that dreaded disease, and freely risked his life for the sake of humanity; the churches and school house at Deep Creek were filled with patients who were placed under his charge. When the war between the states broke out, Dr. Smith volunteered for service as a surgeon in the Confederate Army and in that capacity served until the end of the war. Dr. Smith married first Anna Mariah Smith, Nov. 10, 1829, by whom he had four children, viz: Indiana Smith, Virginia Smith, Edward Livingston Smith, Anna Mariah Smith.

Dr. Smith married second Jane Ellen Herbert, born 1811, by whom he had eight children: Arthur Richardson Smith, Herbert Livingston Smith, Elizabeth Boughan Smith, James Edward Smith, Jack Quarles Smith, Annie Eugenia Smith, Charles Richardson Smith.

Martha Jane Louisa Smith, daughter of Arthur Smith VIII and his wife Susan Richardson Smith, was born in Suffolk, Virginia December 1816 and married a Kilby in Suffolk and there are a goodly number of their descendants now living in Suffolk.

Allen Smith, son of Richard R. Smith and his wife, Mary Cross Smith was born at Somerton, Virginia, September 13, 1804, married February 22, 1832, Susan Copeland, daughter of Henry Copeland and Sally Smith. Susan Copeland was born March 22, 1811 and died June 25, 1851.

Leroy Lee Smith, son of Allen Smith and Susan Copeland, born Feb. 5, 1847, died October 23, 1915, married May 11, 1876, Eliza Edla Norfleet, born Feb. 3, 1850, died Sept. 22, 1931.

Children: Epie Duncan Smith, born March 5, 1877, Richard Felton Smith, Eliza Norfleet Smith, Mary Edla Smith, Blannie Sue Smith.

Epie Duncan Smith married Rev. Marion T. Plyler, born on Sept 14, 1867, on June 20, 1900 at Gatesville, N. C.

Children: Edla Mern, born Oct. 3, 1901, died March 21, 1906; Ruth, born Dec. 6, 1903, died May 21, 1907; Leroy Smith, March 13, 1905; Epie Duncan, born Sept. 4, 1907; Marion Timothy, Aug. 4, 1909; Conrad Norfleet, Feb. 25, 1913; Mern Plyler, July 29, 1915; Grace, June 19, 1919; Eleanor Kimball, Oct. 28, 1921.

THE HUNTER GENEALOGICAL LINE OF EPIE SMITH PLYLER

1. William Hunter, wife Ann, on October 24, 1668, patented land in lower Norfolk, Va. for transfering two persons. April 21, 1695, he patented 240 acres in Nansemond Co., Va. for transfering four persons. Will Jan. 4, 1732-33.

2. William Hunter, wife Sarah, patented land in Nansemond, Va. April 25, 1701, for transfering five persons. Also patented land in Chowan County, N. C. in 1722. Justice. Will March 21, 1749—Probated 1750.

3. Isaac Hunter. In Chowan. Watermill given to Jacob, his son. Will 1752. Division of estate 1753. Large holdings of lands, mills and Negroes given to his eleven children. Impression of dragon on seal.

4. Jacob Hunter (1737-1787). Chowan and Gates Co. N. C. Married Sarah Hill. Vestryman in Edenton, N. C. In Provincial Congress at Halifax, 1776. Appointed Major, 1775. Field officer of Minute Men. Justice. Member of General Assembly of N. C. 1779: Provincial Congress, Halifax, April 4, 1776.

5. Leah Hunter, daughter of Jacob Hunter and Sarah Hill, married Seth Riddick of Gates County, who aided in American

Revolution in furnishing supplies, was in the General Assembly 1784-85.

6. Sarah Riddick, daughter of Seth Riddick and Leah Hunter, born 1780, married Kinchen Norfleet June 4, 1800. They lived in Gates County and reared a large family.

7. Marmaduke Norfleet (son of Kinchen Norfleet and Sarah Riddick) born Oct. 14, 1809, died 1853. Married (2) Eliza Ann Felton, daughter of Kader Felton, born Aug. 5, 1825, died July 18, 1905, of Perquimans County.

8. Eliza Edla Norfleet, daughter of Marmaduke Norfleet and Eliza Ann Felton, of Gates County, N. C. was born Feb. 3, 1850, died September 22, 1931, married Leroy Lee Smith, born February 5, 1847, died October 23, 1915, on May 11, 1876.

Children—Epie Duncan Smith, born March 5, 1877, Richard Felton Smith, Eliza Norfleet Smith, Mary Edla Smith, Blannie Sue Smith.

9. Epie Duncan Smith, born March 5, 1877, married the Reverend Marion Timothy Plyler, on the 20th of June, 1900.

Children: Edla Mern, born October 3, 1901, died March 21, 1906; Ruth, born Dec. 6, 1903, died May 21, 1907; Leroy Smith, born March 13, 1905; Epie Duncan, born Sept. 14, 1907; Marion Timothy, born Aug. 4, 1909; Conrad Norfleet, born Feb. 25, 1913; Mern, born July 29, 1915; Grace, born June 19, 1919; Eleanor Kimball, born Oct. 28, 1921.

THE NORFLEET GENEALOGICAL LINE OF EPIE SMITH PLYLER

1. Thomas Norfleet came from England circa 1650 and patented 300 acres of land on Southern Branch of Nansemond River on north side of the same in Virginia in the year 1668.

Thomas Norfleet Jr. patented land in Virginia in 1695. (Thomas, Jr., James and Marmaduke were brothers who settled in North Carolina; Thomas died without issue.)

2. James Norfleet was born in Virginia and died in North Carolina in 1732. Will dated Nov. 1732. Probated Jan. 15, 1733. A Justice in 1731. He patented and also bought land in both states. Col. William Byrd ran the state line in 1729; this threw many in that section into North Carolina. So James Norfleet was transferred from Nansemond, Va. into Perquimans in N. C.

Married 1———; four children: *John,* Thomas, Mary, Sarah.

Married 2 Mary Sumner. Will dated Oct. 12, 1742, probated Jan. 1743.

3. John Norfleet bought land in Chowan County, N. C., 1738. Will dated 1753, probated 1754.

Married Elizabeth Arnold who died in 1777, daughter of Edward Arnold. Perquimans, Chowan and later Gates, small Counties nearby.

4. *Jacob* Norfleet, Gates County, N. C. He was in Chowan County in 1773; died in Gates County (which had been cut off from Chowan and Hertford Counties). Will, 1778, probated 1780. Married Elizabeth Kinchen, daughter of Thomas Kinchen.

5. Kinchen Norfleet born 1775, died September 12, 1849, lived in Gates County, N. C. Had ten children. Will 1849. Married Sarah Riddick, born 1780, married in 1800. His many descendants have scattered far.

6. Marmaduke Norfleet, born Oct. 14, 1809, died 1853. Married 1 Margaret Jordan, one child, Sarah married John Walton.

Married 2. Eliza Felton, daughter of Kader Felton, born Aug. 5, 1825, died July 18, 1905.

7. Eliza Edla Norfleet, daughter of Marmaduke and Eliza Felton Norfleet of Gates County, N. C., was born Feb. 3rd, 1850, died September 22, 1931; married Leroy Lee Smith, May 11, 1876; Leroy Lee Smith was born on February 5, 1847, died October 23, 1915.

Children: Epie Duncan Smith, born March 5, 1877, Richard Felton Smith, Eliza Norfleet Smith, Mary Edla Smith, Blannie Sue Smith.

THE NORFLEET FAMILY LINE OF EPIE SMITH PLYLER

The Norfleets came from England. We know first of them in Virginia. That they were men of education and means in that country and this is shown by their letters being addressed "Gentleman" in their business and family correspondence with people from England. That they had means is shown by the large tracts of land bought by them on their arrival in America.

VIII. Epie Duncan Smith is the oldest daughter of L. L. Smith, the son of Allen Smith, Somerton, Va. (1804-1885) and of Susan Copeland (both of old Virginia families of Nansemond County).

This line from Thomas Norfleet who patented land in Virginia, 1668, is only one of many that might be followed, for most of these Norfleets had large families and held a first place among the substantial people in their communities. Most of them owned lands

and slaves, building shops and mills and all things necessary to plantation life. The fact that many of them, men and women, left wills makes it easy to follow the families in a time when little attention was given to preserving records. The Norfleets esteemed the family. They are found among the office-holders in the church and were leaders in the community life. They moved among the best people. James (II) was a Justice; Jacob (IV) was one of the commissioners for establishing the Gates County lines in that early day. Among the descendants of Marmaduke, the brother of James (II) were many who filled high places as legislatures, judges and men of affairs.

Though many of these Norfleets and their kinsmen have a place in the books and in the records of the commonwealth, for the most part, these Norfleets rather delighted in exalting their homes and family life than in moving in a conspicuous place to attract the public eye. They moved among the best—with quiet reserve—able to command the respect of all. Many of them held tenaciously to the best of their English traditions.

Authorities: Virginia Land Grant Office in Richmond, Colonial and State Records. Wills at Raleigh, Edenton, Gatesville, N. C. Family Bibles and other family records.

THE KIMBALL GENEALOGICAL LINE OF M. T. PLYLER

A Few of the Descendants of Joseph and Sarah Kimball. They Were Residents of Surry and Later of Brunswick County, Va.

These Kimballs moved to North Carolina about 1740. Peter Kimball, a son of Joseph and Sarah Kimball married Minnie Gilliam.

I. *Peter Kimball* died in 1779. His will is filed among the Bute (Warren) County wills at Raleigh. A copy of this will is recorded in Warren County Will Book I in the Court House at Warrenton, N. C. These Warren County Records disclose many facts concerning the Kimball family and their kinsmen prior to and following the American Revolution.

II. *Buckner Kimball,* son of *Peter,* married Martha Harris, a daughter of West Harris who moved from Granville County, N. C. to Montgomery County in 1774.

III. This *West Harris* was a son of Edward Harris and grandson of Thomas Harris both formerly of Isle of Wight County, Virginia; later, West Harris and family were in North Carolina.

IV. *Peter Kimball, Jr.* and Druary Kimball were also sons of Peter Kimball, Sr.

The children of Buckner Kimball and Martha Harris: 1. Nancy. 2. Patsy. 3. Betsy. 4. Edward. 5. *Harris,* married Dorcas Wood, daughter of Wm. Wood, Randolph Co. 6. William. 7. Arthur. 8. Rebecca. 9. Sarah, married Penuel Wood, son of Wm. Wood of Randolph Co.

Harris Kimball's and Dorcas Wood's children were: 1. *Joel,* married Nancy Kearns, daughter of Thomas Kearns and Rebecca Ivey. 2. Calyer, married Catherine Cauble. 3. Harris, married Margaret Lippard. 4. William, married Mary Hearne. 5. Loburg. 6. Sarah, married Stephen Kirk. 7. Patsy, married Geo. Crowell. 8. Nancy. 9. Bettie. 10. Polly, married M. Joseph Hodge.

FACTS GATHERED FROM JOEL KIMBALL FAMILY BIBLE

Joel Kimball, son of Harris Kimball and grandson of Capt. Buckner Kimball of the War of the Revolution, was born in Randolph County, North Carolina, August 11, 1799, and died in Iredell County, May 28, 1882.

Joel Kimball married Nancy Kerns 1818, daughter of Thomas and Rebecca Ivey Kerns of Davidson County.

Children: Thomas H., November 19, 1819, died in Iredell Jan. 15, 1890, leaving a family.

Wiley J., April 15, 1823, moved to Texas and died there Nov. 1, 1901, reared a family there.

John Alex, May 15, 1823.

Martha, April 7, 1826, married Moyer, moved to Illinois, and reared a family.

Mary Lunda, March 1, 1828, married R. C. Plyler, Iredell County.

Eliza, August 4, 1830, married Houston Scarboro, Montgomery County.

Nancy Kerns Kimball died September 17, 1830.

Joel Kimball married Sarah Lentz 1831. Sara Lentz Kimball was born July 1807.

Children: Henry, December 5, 1831; Nancy L. April 8, 1833; Dorcas A., April 4, 1835; David Hoyle, January 29, 1837; John Calvin, September 5, 1839; Crissy Ann, Aug 29, 1842; Sarah L. October 7, 1844. Laura W., March 7, 1847; William H., September 28, 1848; Joel Laffayette, October 5, 1854.

Sarah Kimball died March 12, 1902.

At the death of Joel Kimball he had 74 grandchildren and 39 great-grandchildren.

FACTS GATHERED FROM DANIEL PLYLER FAMILY BIBLE

Daniel Plyler was born April 12, 1796, died November 18, 1873, *married first*—Graves.

Children: Frederick Plyler, born Aug. 19, 1813, died Nov. 18, 1873, no children; John Plyler, born Feb. 10, 1816, went to California; Hugh Plyler, born Oct. 5, 1819, four children; Nancy Plyler, born June 20, 1821, died young; Elizabeth Plyler, born May 25, 1823, never married; Robert C. Plyler, born Nov. 13, 1825, married Mary L. Kimball Feb. 19, 1850; she died Nov. 12, 1912. He died in Iredell County July 27, 1910; four children: Eliza America, Wesley William, Marion T., and Alva W. Daniel Plyler *married second time* to Amelia Matthews, born April 17, 1806, died Nov. 5, 1896, age 90 years, 7 months, 12 days. Children: Owen Plyler, born April 10, 1827; Calvin Plyler, born January 1829; Pinkney Plyler, born April 26, 1830, killed at Sharpesburg Sept. 17, 1862; Jane A. Plyler, born June 11, 1832; Andrew D. Plyler, born Dec. 18, 1834, died Jan. 3, 1927, married Katherine Kestler; Lena R. Plyler, born Feb. 2, 1840; Marion A. Plyler, born Feb. 2, 1840; Osburn T. Plyler, born Aug. 21, 1842, killed at Reams Station, Aug. 25, 1864; Mary Emeline Plyler, born 1844; John Tillett, the youngest child, is not given in this record.

CERTIFICATE OF FACTS GATHERED FROM THE RECORDS—KIMBALL LINE

Charles, William, Joseph, and Benjamin Kimball, of whom there are records in Surry and Brunswick Counties, Virginia, moved into North Carolina about 1740, taking up lands purchased and by grant in Halifax, Granville, Bute and Warren Counties.

I

Peter Kimball, a son of Joseph and Sarah Kimball, married Winney, daughter of William Gilliam, whose other children were Harris, William and Agnes. William Gilliam in his will, Oct. 12, 1778, also made a bequest to his grandson, Drury Kimball (Granville Co. Records).

Peter Kimball sold land to Wm. Bird of Edgecomb for 130 pounds, Va. currency, Dec. 29, 1766.

Signes: Peter Kimball
Winney Kimball

This deed was signed and delivered in the presence of Buckner Kimball and Isaac Harris, April Court, 1767, Bute County.

In Bute County, Buckner Kimball and Peter Kimball witnessed a deed made Feb. 8, 1767, by William Kimball. This deed was proven by the oath of Buckner Kimball, one of the witnesses.

The will of Peter Kimball made May 26, 1771, and presented and proven in the November Court of Warren County, 1779 (Bute became Warren and Franklin 1779) names as one of the three executives of said will "my son Buckner Kimball" (Warren Wills, Book 1). (The original of this will is with Bute County Wills, North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh.)

Peter Kimball appears on the Muster Rolls of Granville County, 1754. (State Records of N. C. Vol. XXII, pp. 368, 374.)

II

Buckner Kimball, son of Peter Kimball, born in Granville County, circa 1746, married Pattie Harris, daughter of West Harris (born Aug. 13, 1751; died May 14, 1795) vestryman in Granville 1746, Justice 1756.

West Harris married Mary Turner. He rendered service in Revolution. Was listed in Montgomery County in first census with family of 5 whites and 13 slaves. (State Records of N. C. Vol. V. p. 591; Vol. XXIII, p. 250; Vol. XXIV, p. 233.)

Buckner Kimball was granted 173 acres on south side of Yadkin River in Montgomery County, Jan. 10, 1773. He was also granted 200 acres in Montgomery on waters of Jacobs Creek, Salisbury Road, Oct. 11, 1783. (Land Grant Office, Raleigh.) (Unfortunately the records of Anson and Montgomery have been burned.)

Buckner Kimball served as juror in Salisbury June 2, 1775.

Buckner Kimball, Montgomery County, sold to his son, Harris Kimball, of Rowan County, three Negroes, Sept. 1, 1808. (Rowan Records, Deed Book 21, p. 411.)

In the N. C. Revolutionary Army Accounts are three or more records of payments made to Buckner Kimball for service in the American Revolution. (See N. C. Historical Commission.)

In his application for a pension—which was allowed Jan. 7, 1833, for services in the American Revolution—now on file in the Pension Office in Washington, George Shankle, referring to his services under Captain Buckner Kimball, makes the following declaration:

———— "Was discharged by Capt. McLendon, continued a short time, then Wake County, supposed to be one hundred and twenty miles, there stationed as a guard against the Torys at the

time the Legislative body was in session; supposed two months after, was marched back home and discharged by Capt. Buckner Kimball, the year not recalled."

III

Harris Kimball, son of Buckner Kimball, was born circa 1778. He married, 1798, Dorcas Wood Lee, daughter of Capt. William Wood, ancestor of many D.A.R.'s (see record of Mrs. Laura Wood Ellis, No. 186,541). Dorcas Wood married (1) William Lee, (2) Harris Kimball, (3) Henry Cross. Her brother Penuel Wood, Sr. married Sarah Kimball, a daughter of Buckner Kimball.

The state granted Harris Kimball 300 acres of land in Montgomery County on west side of Yadkin River on Royals Creek Dec. 5, 1798. He entered this 1793 (Land Grant office, Raleigh).

Moses Loftin sold to Harris Kimball of Randolph a tract of land, March 4, 1805. (Randolph Records, Book 19, p. 206) (The Rowan County Records show that Harris Kimball was a citizen of Rowan County, April 24, 1806).

On May 19, 1800, Harris Kimball and wife, Dorcas, sold to John Albertson for 63 pounds current money "All of our rights of Dower of that tract or parcel of land late of the estate of Wm. Lee, deceased, dying and being in the said county, etc.—"Randolph Records, Deed Book 8, p. 537).

Feb. 26, 1823, Harris Kimball of Rowan County sold to his son, Joel Kimball tract of land. (Rowan Records, Book 28, p. 192.)

John Hodge sold to Dorcas Kimball, Oct. 16, 1829, a tract of land. This was the interest of Hodge in three tracts of land of 454 acres "of the lands of the late Harris Kimball, deceased." (Rowan Records, Book 31, p. 233.)

Harris Kimball died circa 1825. The Rowan Records (Book 31, p. 233) show that his lands had not been divided, Oct. 16, 1829. Most of the heirs had disposed of their holdings and the widow, Dorcas Kimball, lived at the old home place.

IV

Joel Kimball, oldest son of Harris Kimball, was born Aug. 11, 1799, in Randolph County; he died in Iredell County March 25, 1882. Joel Kimball, Dec. 1818, married, first, Nancy Kerns, daughter of Thomas Kerns and Rebecca Ivey, his wife, of Davidson County. Children born were: Thomas H.—born Nov. 19, 1819—lived and died in Iredell County. Wiley J.—born April 7, 1821—moved to Texas, died there Nov. 1, 1901. John Alexander, born May 15, 1823. Mary Lunda, born March 1, 1828, married Robt. C. Plyler

of Iredell County. Eliza—born Aug. 4, 1830, married Houston Scarboro, Montgomery Co.

Nancy Kerns Kimball, (1) wife of Joel Kimball, died Sept. 17, 1830. Joel Kimball married (2nd) Sarah Lentz, 1831. She was born July 8, 1807. She died March 12, 1902. Of this marriage ten children were born. At the death of Joel Kimball, May 28, 1882, there were 74 grandchildren and 39 great-grandchildren, living for the most part in North Carolina, Illinois and Texas.

Rebecca Ivey Kerns (1786-1845) mother of Nancy Kerns, Joel Kimball's first wife, was a daughter of Benjamin Ivey of Randolph County who died 1802. (Will recorded in Book 2, Randolph Records.) The descendants of Benjamin Ivey are scattered far and wide, as are those of West Harris and Buckner Kimball.

Joel Kimball bought land in Iredell County in 1841. From this time forth his life was spent near Statesville and his grave is in old St. Paul's churchyard near the Southern R. R. and No. 10 highway, two miles east of Statesville.

V

Mary Lunda Kimball, daughter of Joel Kimball, married Robert Conrad Plyler, Feb. 19, 1850. Children were: Eliza A., William W. G., Alva W., and M. T. Plyler.

The statement of fact contained in this record has been gathered from Bibles and other family records, tombstones, county, state and national archives in N. C., Va., and Washington. These corroborate much of my personal knowledge gained by contact with three generations of the Kimball family.

Certification of Notes by M. T. Plyler

The foregoing statement of facts is the result of more than ten years' work among the records, both private and public, assembled from the sources for the benefit of interested friends and relatives of the Kimball families. These facts should be of interest to hundreds of their descendants in America.

I hereby certify that a faithful and accurate transcription of fact has been made and that the statements hereinbefore set forth are true to my best knowledge and belief.

(Signed) M. T. Plyler

Subscribed and sworn to before me at Greensboro, North Carolina, this twentieth day of July, 1943, A.D.

Gertrude W. Everngam
Signature of Notary
My commission expires March 4, 1945

EPIE DUNCAN SMITH

AT EIGHTEEN YEARS

APPENDIX II

THE SETTING OF THE STAGE

Truly "Every man must play a part" but the setting of the stage determines the play.

Here follows a glimpse of the stage—the time is seventy-five years ago:

In 1877, North Carolina was holding fast to the past as a rural state; at this time, there was a pause preceding the present period when the Old North State has pushed forward to a front place in good roads, agricultural development, educational advancement and in manufactured products for world markets.

The Albemarle Country—those few counties cut off from North Carolina by the Chowan River and the Albemarle Sound which at that time had not been bridged—was really an extension of Virginia, south of the state line, and Norfolk was the emporium of both tidewater Virginia and northeastern North Carolina. This section of North Carolina was settled for the most part by people who moved South from Virginia and, in turn North Carolinians have gone to Norfolk to enterprise business of many kinds; consequently the Albemarle people for generations have gone to Norfolk regularly for the things a city supplies.

About fifty miles South of Norfolk, Gatesville, the county seat of Gates County, is situated on Bennet's Creek, a stream which is navigable for small boats that used to come weekly to bring freight; other boats occasionally came to bring other supplies, particularly in autumn to lay down the winter's supply of coal. This little village was my home until I was twenty-three years old.

My earliest recollection, as a child was being prepared for bed by my mother and then sitting in my father's lap to hear stories of "Brer Rabbit" and "Brer Fox" and the other "Creeturs" that inhabited the world of Uncle Remus. Frequently, I would say: "Papa, tell me when you were a little boy." Thinking that some of my grand-children might have some curiosity to know how things were a long time ago, I am recording a glimpse of distant days.

In our household, were my mother, her mother, Mrs. Eliza Felton Norfleet, my two sisters (a brother and another sister had died very young) and my father.

Since both my father and my mother were reared on large plantations with about thirty slaves on each, they had been accustomed to domestic servants and needed a cook, a man-servant, a laundress, and also a nurse when their children were young.

We depended on the man-servant to keep the fires going in winter, to cultivate the garden, to care for the horses and to drive the carriage although when my father went with us, he usually drove the carriage himself as he had a great fondness for horses.

There were a pair of bay horses driven to the carriage and also a gentle horse for the ladies to drive to the buggy. I must acknowledge that none of the ladies of the family were eager to drive a spirited horse; furthermore my father wanted no other kind and kept a spirited saddle-horse which he enjoyed on many fox hunts.

My father had a well-selected library and subscribed to four or five magazines of the finest literary merit, at that time. Among them were *North American Review, The Century, The Literary Digest* and several newspapers, secular and religious. He had a habit of reading the best out of each issue and then calling the attention of the family to certain articles for discussion at the dinner-table for it was quite true as one of the oldest grand-children remarked: "A meal at my grand-father's house was a ceremony." But don't let that word "ceremony" give you the wrong impression of my father's personality; he liked fun and always furnished plenty of fun for his family and all others he knew. Furthermore, my mother was the embodiment of good cheer.

Even if we lived in a village, at a period when electricity and modern inventions and conveniences were not available, in no sense was there a feeling of deprivation, then or even now. Later, both modern plumbing and electricity were installed. Yet there was always within me an inner urge to see around the corner; for that reason, no place where I ever lived supplied a sufficiency to keep me from planning to see what lay beyond the confines of my own community.

In my childhood, the state had no public schools of any worth so my father with several other fathers of the community supported a private school with most excellent teachers.

There were community entertainments and diversions; besides we took trips and had many guests to enliven our days.

All the family took great interest in growing flowers. Each one had a separate bed in the flower-garden and we especially

enjoyed the flowers my mother grew in the green-house in winter when there was an abundance of Calla lilies.

Of course, she would always have some vegetable seeds sowed in the green-house for early plantings since her table was supplied with fresh vegetables of her own growing, the year around.

All of us attended the services at the Methodist Church near by and on Sunday the servants were free for the day after breakfast.

The Sabbath was a holy day and was made different from other days. We had designated "Sunday reading" and were encouraged to do something for someone—maybe, pay a visit to the sick or lonely or take something to some one in need.

My grand-mother was a dignified, attractive woman who had a strict standard of conduct for the young.

She would repeat: "Don't turn your head around in church to see who is coming in, or whisper; that is too cheap and you know better." To this day, her admonition keeps me well-checked.

Really, grand-ma was a dominating influence in the family for she directed the household management, planning the meals, having the care of our clothing and other details involved in the daily care of children. She always sat at the head of the table and the entire family including my father gave due honor to her position. She kept a large basket containing all articles to be mended and she greatly enjoyed getting it emptied week by week. She took great pride in the food she served, having strict supervision of the cook; but when there was a special occasion or dinner guests, she made the dessert herself. Among her special desserts were pound cake, silver cake, chess pies, mince pies made from her own mincemeat, cocoanut pies and "boiled pudding." The "boiled pudding" was our favorite dessert. It was a rich custard pudding poured into a wet cloth bag that had been smeared with flour on the inside to make a thick paste; after the pudding was poured into the bag, it was tied tight with a string and placed carefully in a large pot of rapidly boiling water. When done, it was brought to the table on a large platter and sliced for individual servings with a generous supply of hardsauce.

No matter how busy Grandma was, she never neglected her personal appearance. She kept a "powder-bag" which she made herself out of white flannel containing crushed lump starch; this, she dusted over her face to give it a soft, velvety appearance and finished her toilet by adding a delicate perfume. She never felt

completely dressed without a few drops of perfume about her face and on her delicate linen handkerchief. There were no cosmetic counters in those days or else she would have patronized them liberally.

My mother gave most of her time to gardening and affairs out-of-doors. She directed the hired-man both in the vegetable and flower garden, and also the cook in looking after the chickens in a sizable poultry yard.

She also had considerable work in doing all the embroidery required on little girls' petticoats and other garments. We wore white flannel petticoats in winter and these were scalloped at the bottom with about three inches of silk embroidery above. Then too, the cotton petticoats and panties for summer were elaborately trimmed in "hamburg" and "Val" lace. She and my father were always busy at something together whenever he was at home from the office for each always knew what the other was thinking about. Their children were instilled with a love for the beautiful, a reverance for the sacred, an appreciation of learning and a desire for spiritual values. Whatever the lack in their children, it is through no failure of theirs.

My father was a great lover of nature. I often rode with him along the countryside and invariably he would direct the conversation to the various kinds of trees, shrubbery and wild flowers that were growing about us. Furthermore, he would generally throw into the conversation bits of literature, quoting favorite passages from great writers. If the trip lasted after nightfall, then he told me about the stars and cited passages inspired by the celestial bodies.

He was attorney for two large lumber companies which sometimes required him to go far into the woods in determining boundary lines etc. On one of these trips, he brought back to me a pitcher plant which greatly fascinated me. He told me that plant was found only in the swamp lands of eastern Carolina. Years afterwards, I saw one in Bronx Park marked: "Pitcher Plant found in North Carolina." It was exactly like the one I had owned. He had another gift that fascinated me, that of giving bird calls and acquainting me with those birds found in our section. Often he would give the Bob White call and a whole covey would fly over us. My father inherited largely from his mother who was fond of literature and read a great deal. His father was a most practical man who didn't believe in wasting time and energy without visible results.

During the Civil War, my father's three brothers were in the Confederate Army but he was too young to enlist. His father cured a lot of bacon and hams to meet the food requirements of his family and slaves so it was my father's job to take a horse and cart to Norfolk to get the salt necessary for curing; the salt was scarce and strictly rationed so it required some shrewdness to secure it—all of which pleased him much. But, these trips, back and forth, gave him the opportunity to read the entire plays of Shakespeare. The horse was gentle and knew the road well so he had scarcely anything to do but enjoy his reading. He was about seventeen years old at this time.

At regular intervals, we used to visit at the Richard Smith homestead (my father's grand-father) where his old aunt and cousin lived, neither of whom ever married. We were ushered in the house by "Miss Delia," another old maid who was both house-keeper and companion to them. I remember the well-shaded yard with cedar trees and box-wood and periwinkle growing over the yard; also the large mahogany centre-table with white marble top and claw feet in the parlor; the mahogany high-boy with shaving-stand and also a fancy glass bottle of lavender-water, which they made for themselves. On one occasion, they permitted me to take a whiff; they recommended it most highly in case of a slight head-ache. They always welcomed my father for they wanted to know about the affairs of government and the like and periodicals were rather scarce in those days. They learned all the neighborhood news from their many visitors for they had many callers who came and went but they kept on knitting counterpanes for their relatives and friends, never seeming to look, either at their needles or thread.

When it was time for me to go to college, my parents decided I should go to a North Carolina college—Greensboro Female College since known as Greensboro College—as our section had just been transferred from the Virginia Conference to the North Carolina Conference. Most people expected me to go to Randolph-Macon College since my father graduated at Randolph-Macon and my mother graduated at the old Wesleyan College at Murfreesboro, N. C. but under the auspices of the Methodist of the Virginia Conference.

I graduated with the class of '95 and enjoyed my association with interesting and talented personalities in the faculty, especially in the departments of music and speech. It always seemed about as natural to me to talk on a platform as anywhere else. My father had taught me monologues of many kinds as soon as I learned to talk. In

public contests, I (or my father, possibly he) had won three medals in public speaking so the regular study of speech with public recitals was perfect fun.

On June 20, 1900 I had a wedding day. Many commented on my choice of a minister for a husband. Some suggested: "You will talk the parishioners to death, the first thing you do." However, there are some still surviving after fifty years have passed. When I look back over our conference assignments at Louisburg, Chapel Hill, Greenville, Washington, Elizabeth City, Wilmington, Raleigh and Durham, my memory is crowded with choice personalities who were kind and sympathetic friends. Each town that was my temporary home for a few years has its own treasure of memories. Furthermore, there is a child to claim each of these respective homes as a birth-place. When our third year at Wilmington closed, the Sunday School teacher of our little boy remarked to him: "We hope your father will come back and you will not have to move"— He quickly replied: "I hope we won't move too; 'cause everytime we move, mama has a new baby and we have enough."

There were nine children but two left us in early childhood. At our Golden Wedding Anniversary, there were seven children present and eight grand-children. Since then, there is another grand-child but these are not too many. In the wide universe, there is nothing that can surpass a child to challenge the best in living.

During these days after our Golden Wedding, we spend much time at our home but we are constantly watching for letters bringing news of our children and also news of a visit. We try to be young enough to interest our grand-children but one of us has passed beyond the three score and ten and the other, beyond the four score mark so these figures give us the privileges of old age. We accept them.

Epie S. Plyler.

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